

The Little Treasury Series

A LITTLE TREASURY OF MODERN POETRY

edited by Oscar Williams

A LITTLE TREASURY OF GREAT POETRY

edited by Oscar Williams

A LITTLE TREASURY OF AMERICAN POETRY

edited by Oscar Williams

A LITTLE TREASURY OF AMERICAN PROSE

edited by George Mayberry

In Preparation

A LITTLE TREASURY OF LOVE POEMS

A LITTLE TREASURY OF WORLD POETRY

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PREFACE

No one volume, certainly not so small a book as this, could contain all of the great poems written, throughout seven centuries, in the English tongue. Nor would any poetry lover be likely to expect, or want, all great English poetry in one volume. His purpose in buying a book of this sort is to have a convenient and handily carried volume that allows for constant reading wherever he may be. So the chief difficulty of the editor in making this collection was not so much the gathering of material as the hard process which determined what he should leave out. For all great poems have an equal claim to honor though different readers may enjoy each in very varying degrees. The editor solved the problem in the only way it could be solved: by putting in his own favorites and allowing his personal taste to determine the harmony of the book as a whole.

The original reason, and plan, for the book was to provide a companion anthology for *A Little Treasury of Modern Poetry*, containing great poems from all periods preceding the modern, and, in the main, this plan has been adhered to. However, for the sake of those readers who prefer a complete collection in respect to time, in one volume, great poems of the modern period have been

Preface

included in this book also. The duplication in *A Little Treasury of Great Poetry* and *A Little Treasury of Modern Poetry* is nevertheless negligible, since the percentage of modern poetry in a selection covering the period from the thirteenth century to the present is necessarily very small. Many of the modern poems in this volume are not in the other and vice versa. For example, out of twelve selections by W. B. Yeats in each volume only two are duplicates.

This collection contains more than five hundred poems and is not limited to any one kind of poem. It contains poems both long and short, narrative and lyric, ballads and passages from plays and long poems. By avoiding any arbitrary rule as to the form or content of the poems a richer and more varied collection was possible than if only one form had been admitted. But the majority of the choices are short and lyrics predominate. Except for Edward Fitzgerald's "Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám," which is essentially an original creative work, there are no translations from other languages. Some long poems, such as Oscar Wilde's "The Ballad of Reading Gaol," have been cut because it seemed to the editor that their unity was not harmed by the excisions. Other long poems such as Coleridge's "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" are uncut: any shortening would have maimed them. Songs which have been taken from plays or long poems, as in Tennyson and Shakespeare, have been presented without indication from which long poem or play they have come since such lyrics are complete in themselves. On the other hand, cer-

8

Preface

tain passages which, though perfectly unified in themselves, are nevertheless out of context, have a note telling of their sources.

The poems are arranged, under running heads, in general categories in accordance with their emotional tenor or subject matter, instead of in alphabetical or chronological order. Thus the reader's attention is brought first to the poem rather than to the poet's name or representation. Any one poem might, perhaps, have been entered under any one of several heads rather than that whereunder it appears: a poem may be nostalgic as well as amorous, as much upon the subject of age as upon the subject of death, *etc.* The reader in choosing a subject to fit his mood may disagree in some cases with the editor, but it is hoped he will enjoy this arrangement and find interest in different treatments of similar themes and in the juxtaposition, for example, of Christina Rossetti and Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke, of E. E. Cummings and John Donne. The headings do not indicate sections but are used merely to bring together poems on like themes. There was no intention of having an equal number of poems under each heading, or even a set minimum. The poems were chosen on their individual merits and then placed in their present order.

In some cases, Middle or Elizabethan English has been modernized in spelling for those who prefer this slight form of translation to difficulty of reading. In Chaucer, when modern spelling could little clarify the meaning and would destroy much of the charm, archaic spelling has

tained. Glosses have been given where they needed, as in the dialect of Robert Burns.

At the end of the book will be found *A Little Treasury of Verwocky* which has a claim to be taken as poetry along with its high and serious cousins. English nonsense in its famous examples is no less profound because it is witty. Strength is a necessity to light handling and humor a sign of mental health. So any anthology of great English poems would lack one of English poetry's most characteristic exercises if humorous and light-hearted verse were altogether excluded.

No attempt has been made at attaining perfect representation of all periods of English poetry, nor of all major poets. The anthology will have achieved its purpose when it brings to the reader's enjoyment and attention, poem by poem, a pleasurable collection of great poems in convenient small one-volume form.

—OSCAR WILLIAMS

Contents

	PAGE
COPYRIGHT NOTICES AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	5
PREFACE	7

Part I

A Little Treasury of Great Poetry

THE POETRY OF EARTH IS NEVER DEAD

THE POETRY OF EARTH IS NEVER DEAD.	<i>John Keats</i>	37
DAFFODILS	<i>William Wordsworth</i>	37
THE CLOUD	<i>Percy Bysshe Shelley</i>	38
INVERSNDAID	<i>Gerard Manley Hopkins</i>	41
TO ONE WHO HAS BEEN LONG IN CITY PRISON	<i>John Keats</i>	42
ODE TO EVENING	<i>William Collins</i>	42
TO AUTUMN	<i>John Keats</i>	44
PRELUDE FROM "THE VISION OF SIR LAUNFAL"	<i>James Russell Lowell</i>	46
THOUGHTS IN A GARDEN.	<i>Andrew Marvell</i>	49
ODE TO THE WEST WIND.	<i>Percy Bysshe Shelley</i>	51
GRASS	<i>Walt Whitman</i>	53
UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE.	<i>William Wordsworth</i>	55
UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE	<i>William Shakespeare</i>	56
THE SEA	<i>George Gordon, Lord Byron</i>	57
		11

Contents

SPRING

HOME-THOUGHTS FROM ABROAD.	<i>Robert Browning</i>	59
SPRING	<i>Thomas Nashe</i>	60
TO THE CUCKOO	<i>William Wordsworth</i>	60
WRITTEN IN MARCH	<i>William Wordsworth</i>	62
IT WAS A LOVER AND HIS LASS. <i>William Shakespeare</i>		62
FROM YOU HAVE I BEEN ABSENT		
	<i>William Shakespeare</i>	63
PIPPA'S SONG	<i>Robert Browning</i>	64
CUCKOO SONG	<i>Anonymous</i>	64

BEGINNINGS

TO A FRIEND WHOSE WORK HAS COME TO NOTHING		
	<i>William Butler Yeats</i>	65
HARK! HARK! THE LARK!	<i>William Shakespeare</i>	66
BEATA L'ALMA	<i>Herbert Read</i>	66
THE RAINBOW	<i>William Wordsworth</i>	68
THE ROOM	<i>Conrad Aiken</i>	69
AMONG SCHOOL CHILDREN. . . .	<i>William Butler Yeats</i>	70
THE ROAD	<i>Edwin Muir</i>	73
THE RETREAT	<i>Henry Vaughan</i>	74
WONDER	<i>Thomas Traherne</i>	75

SPIRIT OF MAN

LOCKSLEY HALL.	<i>Alfred, Lord Tennyson</i>	77
THE WOLVES	<i>Allen Tate</i>	89
BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF YEARS		
	<i>Algernon Charles Swinburne</i>	90
THE SOLITUDE OF ALEXANDER SELKIRK		
	<i>William Cowper</i>	92
I THINK CONTINUALLY OF THOSE WHO WERE		
TRULY GREAT	<i>Stephen Spender</i>	94

Contents

BEAUTY IS TRUTH, TRUTH BEAUTY

ON A GRECIAN URN	John Keats 95
A THING OF BEAUTY IS A JOY FOR EVER . .	John Keats 96

GOD, LOVER OF SOULS

IN THE VALLEY OF THE ELWY

	<i>Gerard Manley Hopkins</i> 98
THE MARSHES OF GLYNN	<i>Sidney Lanier</i> 98
ON ANOTHER'S SORROW	<i>William Blake</i> 103
PIED BEAUTY	<i>Gerard Manley Hopkins</i> 104
BRAHMA	<i>Ralph Waldo Emerson</i> 105
THE RHODORA	<i>Ralph Waldo Emerson</i> 105
GOD'S GRANDEUR	<i>Gerard Manley Hopkins</i> 106
THE DARK ANGEL	<i>Lionel Johnson</i> 107
THE DIVINE IMAGE	<i>William Blake</i> 109
THE LAMB	<i>William Blake</i> 110
JEAN RICHEPIN'S SONG	<i>Herbert Trench</i> 111

IN THAT LAND WERE WE BORN

THE MEDITERRANEAN	<i>Allen Tate</i> 112
SPENSER'S IRELAND	<i>Marianne Moore</i> 113

UP THE AIRY MOUNTAIN

THE FAIRIES	<i>William Allingham</i> 116
THE FAIRIES' FAREWELL	<i>Richard Corbett</i> 118
TOM O'BEDLAM'S SONG	<i>Anonymous</i> 119
THE CUTTY WREN	<i>Anonymous</i> 123
NOW THE HUNGRY LION ROARS	
	<i>William Shakespeare</i> 124
YOU SPOTTED SNAKES	<i>William Shakespeare</i> 125

Contents

WAR

THE SHOW	<i>Wilfred Owen</i>	126
A REFUSAL TO MOURN THE DEATH, BY FIRE, OF A CHILD IN LONDON	<i>Dylan Thomas</i>	128
SESTINA: ALTAFORTE	<i>Ezra Pound</i>	129
THE MARCH INTO VIRGINIA	<i>Herman Melville</i>	130
GREATER LOVE	<i>Wilfred Owen</i>	132
AN IRISH AIRMAN FORESEES HIS DEATH	<i>William Butler Yeats</i>	133
THE BURIAL OF SIR JOHN MOORE AFTER CORUNNA	<i>Charles Wolfe</i>	133
THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB	<i>George Gordon, Lord Byron</i>	135

MORTALITY

THE DEAD	<i>Rupert Brooke</i>	136
THE GROUNDHOG	<i>Richard Eberhart</i>	137
ON A DEAD CHILD	<i>Robert Bridges</i>	138
LITTLE BOY BLUE	<i>Eugene Field</i>	139
TO AN ATHLETE DYING YOUNG.....	<i>A. E. Housman</i>	140
OUR REVELS NOW ARE ENDED.....	<i>William Shakespeare</i>	141

DEATH

THE INDIAN BURYING GROUND.....	<i>Philip Freneau</i>	142
STOPPING BY WOODS ON A SNOWY EVENING	<i>Robert Frost</i>	143
I WAGE NOT ANY FEUD WITH DEATH	<i>Alfred, Lord Tennyson</i>	144
THE GARDEN OF PROSPERINE	<i>Algernon Charles Swinburne</i>	145
THERE'S A CERTAIN SLANT OF LIGHT	<i>Emily Dickinson</i>	148

Contents

MUSIC, WHEN SOFT VOICES DIE

	<i>Percy Bysshe Shelley</i>	150
SONG	<i>Christina Georgina Rossetti</i>	151
THANATOPSIS	<i>William Cullen Bryant</i>	151
OF ONE DEAD	<i>Alfred, Lord Tennyson</i>	154
DIRGE WITHOUT MUSIC...	<i>Edna St. Vincent Millay</i>	155
SHE DWELT AMONG THE UNTHRODDEN WAYS		
	<i>William Wordsworth</i>	156
A FORSAKEN GARDEN...	<i>Algernon Charles Swinburne</i>	156
DEATH, BE NOT PROUD	<i>John Donne</i>	159
THE GLORIES OF OUR BLOOD AND STATE		
	<i>James Shirley</i>	160
LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI	<i>John Keats</i>	161
CROSSING THE BAR	<i>Alfred, Lord Tennyson</i>	163
VITAL SPARK OF HEAVENLY FLAME		
	<i>Alexander Pope</i>	163
REQUIEM	<i>Robert Louis Stevenson</i>	164

DESPAIR, SUFFERING

MUSEE DES BEAUX ARTS	<i>W. H. Auden</i>	165
TO BE, OR NOT TO BE	<i>William Shakespeare</i>	166
VIXI PUPELLIS NUPER IDONEUS...	<i>Sir Thomas Wyatt</i>	167
WHEN THE LAMP IS SHATTERED		
	<i>Percy Bysshe Shelley</i>	168
MUNICH ELEGY NO. 1	<i>George Barker</i>	169
CARRION COMFORT	<i>Gerard Manley Hopkins</i>	171
TO THE NIGHTINGALE	<i>Richard Barnfield</i>	172
CARE-CHARMER SLEEP	<i>Samuel Daniel</i>	174
ALL THE FLOWERS OF THE SPRING ...	<i>John Webster</i>	174
TO JESUS ON HIS BIRTHDAY		
	<i>Edna St. Vincent Millay</i>	175
I WAKE AND FEEL THE FELL OF DARK		
	<i>Gerard Manley Hopkins</i>	176
CAPTAIN CARPENTER	<i>John Crowe Ransom</i>	176

Contents

THE GARDEN OF LOVE	<i>William Blake</i>	179
RICHARD CORY	<i>Edwin Arlington Robinson</i>	179
THE BLACK PANTHER	<i>John Hall Wheelock</i>	180

IMPERFECTION OF MAN

I SAW A CHAPEL ALL OF GOLD.	<i>William Blake</i>	181
ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE.	<i>William Shakespeare</i>	181
FLOWER IN THE CRANNIED WALL		
	<i>Alfred, Lord Tennyson</i>	182
FAREWELL TO ALL MY GREATNESS		
	<i>William Shakespeare</i>	183
IN THE NAKED BED, IN PLATO'S CAVE		
	<i>Delmore Schwartz</i>	184
THE ANGEL	<i>William Blake</i>	185
ULYSSES ADVISES ACHILLES NOT TO LET SLIP		
OPPORTUNITY	<i>William Shakespeare</i>	185
from A SATYR AGAINST MANKIND		
	<i>John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester</i>	187
THEY THAT HAVE POWER TO HURT		
	<i>William Shakespeare</i>	191
WOMAN	<i>Oliver Goldsmith</i>	191

THE BODY

THE HEAVY BEAR	<i>Delmore Schwartz</i>	192
PAINTED HEAD	<i>John Crowe Ransom</i>	193

MOURNING

SONG FROM AELLA	<i>Thomas Chatterton</i>	194
ELEGY ON GORDON BARBER	<i>Gene Derwood</i>	197
ROSE AYLMEYER	<i>Walter Savage Landor</i>	199
MEMORIAL, FOR THREE YOUNG SEAMEN		
	<i>George Barker</i>	199

Contents

REQUIESCAT	<i>Matthew Arnold</i>	201
ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD		
	<i>Thomas Gray</i>	202
LAMENT FOR FLODDEN	<i>Jane Elliot</i>	207
FEAR NO MORE	<i>William Shakespeare</i>	208
FULL FATHOM FIVE THY FATHER LIES		
	<i>William Shakespeare</i>	208
CONCORD HYMN	<i>Ralph Waldo Emerson</i>	209
THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS	<i>Thomas Hood</i>	210
POEM, WRITTEN ON THE EVE OF EXECUTION		
	<i>Chidiock Tichbourne</i>	213
A NOCTURNAL UPON SAINT LUCY'S DAY		
	<i>John Donne</i>	214
LYCIDAS	<i>John Milton</i>	215

INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY

ODE, INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY		
	<i>William Wordsworth</i>	221
CUCHULAIN COMFORTED	<i>William Butler Yeats</i>	228
AS SOMETIMES IN A DEAD MAN'S FACE		
	<i>Alfred, Lord Tennyson</i>	230
A SLUMBER DID MY SPIRIT SEAL		
	<i>William Wordsworth</i>	230
ON HIS DECEASED WIFE	<i>John Milton</i>	231
POOR SOUL	<i>William Shakespeare</i>	231
THEY ARE ALL GONE INTO THE WORLD OF LIGHT		
	<i>Henry Vaughan</i>	233
WHISPERS OF IMMORTALITY	<i>T. S. Eliot</i>	234
ON SOME SHELLS FOUND INLAND		
	<i>Trumbull Stickney</i>	235
TO LUCASTA, ON GOING BEYOND THE SEAS		
	<i>Richard Lovelace</i>	236
A NOISELESS PATIENT SPIDER	<i>Walt Whitman</i>	236
I HOLD IT TRUTH	<i>Alfred, Lord Tennyson</i>	237

THE GARDEN OF LOVE	William Blake	179
RICHARD CORY	Edwin Arlington Robinson	179
THE BLACK PANTHER	John Hall Wheelock	180

I SAW A CHAPEL ALL OF GOLD.....	William Blake	181
ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE. . .	William Shakespeare	181
FLOWER IN THE CRANNIED WALL		
	Alfred, Lord Tennyson	182
FAREWELL TO ALL MY GREATNESS		
	William Shakespeare	183
IN THE NAKED BED, IN PLATO'S CAVE		
	Delmore Schwartz	184
THE ANGEL	William Blake	185
ULYSSES ADVISES ACHILLES NOT TO LET SLIP		
OPPORTUNITY	William Shakespeare	185
from A SATYR AGAINST MANKIND		
	John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester	187
THEY THAT HAVE POWER TO HURT		
	William Shakespeare	191
WOMAN	Oliver Goldsmith	191'

THE HEAVY BEAR*Delmore Schwartz* 192
PAINTED HEAD*John Crowe Ransom* 193

SONG FROM AELLA	<i>Thomas Chatterton</i>	194
ELEGY ON GORDON BARBER	<i>Gene Derwood</i>	197
ROSE AYLMER	<i>Walter Savage Landor</i>	199
MEMORIAL, FOR THREE YOUNG SEAMEN	<i>George Barker</i>	199

Contents

REQUIESCAT	<i>Matthew Arnold</i>	201
ELLEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD		
	<i>Thomas Gray</i>	202
LAMENT FOR FLODDEN	<i>Jane Elliot</i>	207
FEAR NO MORE	<i>William Shakespeare</i>	208
FULL FATHOM FIVE THY FATHER LIES		
	<i>William Shakespeare</i>	208
CONCORD HYMN	<i>Ralph Waldo Emerson</i>	209
THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS	<i>Thomas Hood</i>	210
POEM, WRITTEN ON THE EVE OF EXECUTION		
	<i>Chidtock Tichbourne</i>	213
A NOCTURNAL UPON SAINT LUCY'S DAY		
	<i>John Donne</i>	214
LYCIDAS	<i>John Milton</i>	215

INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY

ODE, INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY		
	<i>William Wordsworth</i>	221
CUCHULAIN COMFORTED	<i>William Butler Yeats</i>	228
AS SOMETIMES IN A DEAD MAN'S FACE		
	<i>Alfred, Lord Tennyson</i>	230
A SLUMBER DID MY SPIRIT SEAL		
	<i>William Wordsworth</i>	230
ON HIS DECEASED WIFE	<i>John Milton</i>	231
POOR SOUL	<i>William Shakespeare</i>	231
THEY ARE ALL GONE INTO THE WORLD OF LIGHT		
	<i>Henry Vaughan</i>	233
WHISPERS OF IMMORTALITY	<i>T. S. Eliot</i>	234
ON SOME SHELLS FOUND INLAND		
	<i>Trumbull Stickney</i>	235
TO LUCASTA, ON GOING BEYOND THE SEAS		
	<i>Richard Lovelace</i>	236
A NOISELESS PATIENT SPIDER	<i>Walt Whitman</i>	236
I HOLD IT TRUTH	<i>Alfred, Lord Tennyson</i>	237

Contents

VISION AND PRAYER

VISION AND PRAYER	<i>Dylan Thomas</i>	238
from THE CITY OF DREADFUL NIGHT	<i>James Thomson</i>	244
A PRAYER FOR MY DAUGHTER	<i>William Butler Yeats</i>	248
PRELUDES TO ATTITUDE	<i>Conrad Aiken</i>	251
IN TIME OF PESTILENCE	<i>Thomas Nashe</i>	255
SUNDAY MORNING	<i>Wallace Stevens</i>	256
BE NEAR ME	<i>Alfred, Lord Tennyson</i>	261
THE SEESAW	<i>Oscar Williams</i>	262

THE RUBÁIYÁT

THE RUBÁIYÁT OF OMAR KHAYYÁM	<i>Edward Fitzgerald</i>	264
------------------------------	--------------------------	-----

SONGS

THE HARP THAT ONCE THROUGH TARA'S HALLS	<i>Thomas Moore</i>	278
SONG	<i>Thomas Carew</i>	279
CHERRY-RIPE	<i>Thomas Campion</i>	280
HUNTING SONG	<i>Sir Walter Scott</i>	281
BELIEVE ME, IF ALL THOSE ENDEARING YOUNG		
CHARMS	<i>Thomas Moore</i>	282
SWEET AFTON	<i>Robert Burns</i>	283
AULD LANG SYNE	<i>Robert Burns</i>	284
TO CELIA	<i>Ben Jonson</i>	285
MY HEART'S IN THE HIGHLANDS	<i>Robert Burns</i>	285
MY LOVE IS LIKE A RED RED ROSE	<i>Robert Burns</i>	286
SONG	<i>Thomas Lovell Beddoes</i>	287
MADRIGAL	<i>Anonymous</i>	287

Contents

THE BATTLE-HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC

Julia Ward Howe 288

BLOW, BLOW, THOU WINTER WIND

William Shakespeare 289

LOVE NOT ME FOR COMELY GRACE... *Anonymous* 290

WEEP NO MORE *John Fletcher* 290

YOUNG AND OLD *Charles Kingsley* 291

COMIN' THRO' THE RYE *Robert Burns* 291

TAKE, O TAKE *William Shakespeare* 292

SIGH NO MORE, LADIES *William Shakespeare* 293

SONG *William Shakespeare* 293

HOW SHOULD I YOUR TRUE LOVE KNOW

William Shakespeare 294

A BOY'S SONG *James Hogg* 295

TELL ME WHERE IS FANCY BRED

William Shakespeare 296

REEDS OF INNOCENCE *William Blake* 296

SONG *William Blake* 297

MADRIGAL *William Drummond* 298

ANNIE LAURIE *William Douglas* 298

SONG *William Shakespeare* 299

THE DEVOTION TO SOMETHING AFAR FROM THE SPHERE OF OUR SORROW

ONE WORD IS TOO OFTEN PROFANED

Percy Bysshe Shelley 300

SESTINA *Sir Philip Sidney* 301

THE SOLITARY REAPER *William Wordsworth* 304

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE *John Keats* 305

NON SUM QUALIS ERAM BONAE SUB REGNO

CYNARAE *Ernest Dowson* 308

TO A SKYLARK *Percy Bysshe Shelley* 309

THE LOTOS-EATERS: CHORIC SONG

Alfred, Lord Tennyson 312

Contents

PRAISE FOR AN URN	<i>Hart Crane</i>	317
DOVER BEACH	<i>Matthew Arnold</i>	318
BLOW, BUGLE, BLOW	<i>Alfred, Lord Tennyson</i>	319
O VIRTUOUS LIGHT	<i>Elmor Wylie</i>	320
THE HAUNTED PALACE	<i>Edgar Allan Poe</i>	321
EUCLID ALONE HAS LOOKED ON BEAUTY BARE	<i>Edna St. Vincent Millay</i>	322
THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US	<i>William Wordsworth</i>	323
LOST ACRES	<i>Robert Graves</i>	324
ULALUME	<i>Edgar Allan Poe</i>	325

LOVE

LOVE WILL FIND OUT THE WAY	<i>Anonymous</i>	328
THE LOVER IN WINTER PLAINETH FOR THE SPRING	<i>Anonymous</i>	330
NO, NO, POOR SUFFERING HEART....	<i>John Dryden</i>	330
THE NIGHT HAS A THOUSAND EYES	<i>Francis William Bourdillon</i>	331
TO MYRA	<i>Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke</i>	331
A BIRTHDAY	<i>Christina Georgina Rossetti</i>	332
THE HIGHWAY	<i>Sir Philip Sidney</i>	333
TO HIS COY MISTRESS	<i>Andrew Marvell</i>	334
SWEET-AND-TWENTY	<i>William Shakespeare</i>	335
THE DEFINITION OF LOVE	<i>Andrew Marvell</i>	336
THE INDIAN SERENADE	<i>Percy Bysshe Shelley</i>	337
BREAK OF DAY	<i>John Donne</i>	338
COME, SLEEP	<i>Sir Philip Sidney</i>	339
MY LOVE IS LIKE TO ICE.....	<i>Edmund Spenser</i>	339
I ENVY NOT IN ANY MOODS	<i>Alfred, Lord Tennyson</i>	340
MY LOVE IS STRENGTHENED..	<i>William Shakespeare</i>	341
FAREWELL, UNGRATEFUL TRAITOR...	<i>John Dryden</i>	341
O NEVER SAY THAT I WAS FALSE OF HEART	<i>William Shakespeare</i>	342

Contents

THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER . . .	<i>Alfred, Lord Tennyson</i>	343
FAIR IS MY LOVE	<i>Samuel Daniel</i>	314
LET ME NOT TO THE MARRIAGE OF TRUE MINDS	<i>William Shakespeare</i>	344
ONE DAY I WROTE HER NAME UPON THE STRAND	<i>Edmund Spenser</i>	345
A MODEST LOVE	<i>Sir Edward Dyer</i>	346
' MAUD	<i>Alfred, Lord Tennyson</i>	346
AS THRO' THE LAND AT EVE WE WENT	<i>Alfred, Lord Tennyson</i>	349
TO LUCASTA, ON GOING TO THE WARS	<i>Richard Lovelace</i>	349
TO ALTHEA FROM PRISON	<i>Richard Lovelace</i>	350
from LOVE IN THE VALLEY	<i>George Meredith</i>	351
WHEN TO THE SESSIONS OF SWEET SILENT	<i>William Shakespeare</i>	354
THOUGHT	<i>William Shakespeare</i>	355
WHERE LATE THE SWEET BIRDS SANG	<i>Thomas Lodge</i>	356
LOVE IN MY BOSOM LIKE A BEE	<i>John Lyly</i>	357
CUPID AND CAMPASPE	<i>Christopher Marlowe</i>	358
THE PASSIONATE SHEPHERD TO HIS LOVE	<i>Sir Walter Raleigh</i>	359
THE NYMPH'S REPLY TO THE SHEPHERD	<i>William Shakespeare</i>	360
HOW LIKE A WINTER	<i>Elizabeth Barrett Browning</i>	360
HOW DO I LOVE THEE?	<i>William Shakespeare</i>	361
FAREWELL! THOU ART TOO DEAR	<i>John Donne</i>	362
LOVE'S DEITY	<i>Christopher Marlowe</i>	363
WHO EVER LOVED, THAT LOVED NOT AT FIRST	<i>Elizabeth Barrett Browning</i>	363
' SIGHT	<i>William Shakespeare</i>	364
IF THOU MUST LOVE ME	<i>John Donne</i>	364
THE EXPENSE OF SPIRIT		
THE CANONIZATION		

Contents

FULL MANY A GLORIOUS MORNING HAVE I SEEN	
	<i>William Shakespeare</i> 366
SHALL I COMPARE THEE TO A SUMMER'S DAY	
	<i>William Shakespeare</i> 367
THE ECSTASY	<i>John Donne</i> 367
THE SUN RISING	<i>John Donne</i> 370
LOVE IS A SICKNESS	<i>Samuel Daniel</i> 371
WHEN IN DISGRACE WITH FORTUNE AND	
MEN'S EYES	<i>William Shakespeare</i> 371
THE RELIC	<i>John Donne</i> 372
DID NOT THE HEAVENLY RHETORIC OF THINE EYE	
	<i>William Shakespeare</i> 373
WHAT IS YOUR SUBSTANCE...	<i>William Shakespeare</i> 374
THE FLEA	<i>John Donne</i> 375
THE ROSE LOOKS FAIR.....	<i>William Shakespeare</i> 376
THE GOOD-MORROW	<i>John Donne</i> 376
TIR'D WITH ALL THESE	<i>William Shakespeare</i> 377
THE NIGHTINGALE, AS SOON AS APRIL BRINGETH	
	<i>Sir Philip Sidney</i> 378
SONNET	<i>Edna St. Vincent Millay</i> 379
TO THE MOON	<i>Sir Philip Sidney</i> 379
WHEN IN THE CHRONICLE OF WASTED TIME	
	<i>William Shakespeare</i> 380
THE PHOENIX AND THE TURTLE	
	<i>William Shakespeare</i> 381
BRIGHT STAR! WOULD I WERE STEADFAST AS	
THOU ART	<i>John Keats</i> 383
ON HIS MISTRESS	<i>John Donne</i> 384
CRAZY JANE TALKS WITH THE BISHOP	
	<i>William Butler Yeats</i> 386
LOVE'S INFINITENESS	<i>John Donne</i> 386
THE PARTING	<i>Michael Drayton</i> 388
THE DREAM	<i>John Donne</i> 388
NIGHT AND DAY	<i>Michael Drayton</i> 389
LOVE'S PHILOSOPHY	<i>Percy Bysshe Shelley</i> 390

Contents

MY TRUE LOVE HATH MY HEART

	<i>Sir Philip Sidney</i>	391
YE TRADEFUL MERCHANTS	<i>Edmund Spenser</i>	391
BID ADIEU TO MAIDENHOOD	<i>James Joyce</i>	392
STRANGE FITS OF PASSION HAVE I KNOWN		
	<i>William Wordsworth</i>	393
PROTHALAMION	<i>Edmund Spenser</i>	394

BEAUTY OF WOMEN

HE JESTS AT SCARS, THAT NEVER FELT A WOUND		
	<i>William Shakespeare</i>	400
HELEN	<i>Christopher Marlowe</i>	401
CLEOPATRA	<i>William Shakespeare</i>	401
WISIES FOR THE SUPPOSED MISTRESS		
	<i>Richard Crashaw</i>	403
RUTH	<i>Thomas Hood</i>	405
TO HELEN	<i>Edgar Allan Poe</i>	406
SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY .	<i>George Gordon, Lord Byron</i>	407
BALADE	<i>Geoffrey Chaucer</i>	408
THERE BE NONE OF BEAUTY'S DAUGHTERS		
	<i>George Gordon, Lord Byron</i>	408

INCONSTANCY

GO AND CATCH A FALLING STAR	<i>John Donne</i>	409
THE MESSAGE	<i>John Donne</i>	410
CHANGE	<i>John Donne</i>	411

THE LASSES, O

GREEN GROW THE RASHES, O	<i>Robert Burns</i>	412
ON A GIRDLE	<i>Edmund Waller</i>	413
ROSALINE	<i>Thomas Lodge</i>	414
JENNY KISS'D ME	<i>Leigh Hunt</i>	416

Contents

HE THAT LOVES A ROSTY CHEEK	<i>Thomas Carew</i>	416
SHALL I WASTING IN DESPAIR	<i>George Wither</i>	417
THE CONSTANT LOVER	<i>Sir John Suckling</i>	418
WHY SO PALE AND WAN?	<i>Sir John Suckling</i>	419
SAINT VALENTINE'S DAY	<i>William Shakespeare</i>	420
TO THE VIRGINS, TO MAKE MUCH OF TIME	<i>Robert Herrick</i>	420
HEAR, YE LADIES	<i>John Fletcher</i>	421

SEX

SONG	<i>John Dryden</i>	422
LOVE'S PROGRESS	<i>John Donne</i>	423
I LIKE MY BODY	<i>E. E. Cummings</i>	426
GOING TO BED	<i>John Donne</i>	426
DELIGHT IN DISORDER	<i>Robert Herrick</i>	428
UPON JULIA'S CLOTHES	<i>Robert Herrick</i>	428

SNOW

LONDON SNOW	<i>Robert Bridges</i>	429
WINTER	<i>William Shakespeare</i>	430
THE SNOW-STORM	<i>Ralph Waldo Emerson</i>	431
SNOW	<i>W. R. Rodgers</i>	433

DEVILS THERE MANY BE, AND GODS BUT ONE

LUCIFER IN STARLIGHT	<i>George Meredith</i>	434
THREE THINGS THERE BE	<i>Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke</i>	434

AUGURIES OF INNOCENCE

AUGURIES OF INNOCENCE	<i>William Blake</i>	435
---------------------------------	----------------------	-----

OF WHAT IS PAST, OR PASSING,
OR TO COME

SAILING TO BYZANTIUM.....	<i>William Butler Yeats</i>	439
KUBLA KHAN	<i>Samuel Taylor Coleridge</i>	440
SONNET	<i>John Masefield</i>	442
JEHU	<i>Louis MacNeice</i>	443
LIKE TO THE FALLING OF A STAR.....	<i>Henry King</i>	444
TEARS, IDLE TEARS.....	<i>Alfred, Lord Tennyson</i>	445
OPT, IN THE STILLY NIGHT	<i>Thomas Moore</i>	446
THE RIVER OF LIFE	<i>Thomas Campbell</i>	447
I REMEMBER, I REMEMBER.....	<i>Thomas Hood</i>	448
REMEMBRANCE	<i>Emily Brontë</i>	449
THE SECOND COMING.....	<i>William Butler Yeats</i>	450
THE OLD FAMILIAR FACES	<i>Charles Lamb</i>	451
THE DARKLING THRUSH	<i>Thomas Hardy</i>	452
BREAK, BREAK, BREAK	<i>Alfred, Lord Tennyson</i>	453

TIME

ON TIME	<i>John Milton</i>	454
AFTERWARDS	<i>Thomas Hardy</i>	455
ON A FLY DRINKING OUT OF HIS CUP	<i>William Oldys</i>	456
THE HOUR GLASS	<i>Ben Jonson</i>	456
BURNT NORTON.....	<i>T. S. Eliot</i>	457

AGE

WHEN YOU ARE OLD.....	<i>William Butler Yeats</i>	463
JOHN ANDERSON	<i>Robert Burns</i>	464
RABBI BEN EZRA	<i>Robert Browning</i>	464

Contents

BALLADS

THOMAS THE RHYMER	<i>Anonymous</i>	471
THE LADY OF SHALOTT.	<i>Alfred, Lord Tennyson</i>	474
AN EXCELENTE BALADE OF CHARITIE		
	<i>Thomas Chatterton</i>	480
QUIA AMORE LANGUEO	<i>Anonymous</i>	483
ANNABEL LEE	<i>Edgar Allan Poe</i>	487
HELEN OF KIRCONNELL	<i>Anonymous</i>	489
THE CONGO	<i>Vachel Lindsay</i>	491
LORD RANDAL	<i>Anonymous</i>	496
EDWARD, EDWARD	<i>Anonymous</i>	497
THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER		
	<i>Samuel Taylor Coleridge</i>	499
THE SPANISH ARMADO	<i>Anonymous</i>	522
THE THREE BUSHES	<i>William Butler Yeats</i>	524
THE BLESSED DAMOZEL	<i>Dante Gabriel Rossetti</i>	526
SIR GALAHAD	<i>Alfred, Lord Tennyson</i>	531
from THE BALLAD OF READING GAOL. .	<i>Oscar Wilde</i>	534
THE RAVEN	<i>Edgar Allan Poe</i>	542

THE ANIMALS

ANIMALS	<i>Walt Whitman</i>	548
TO A MOUSE	<i>Robert Burns</i>	549
A RUNNABLE STAG	<i>John Davidson</i>	551
ON A FAVOURITE CAT DROWNED IN A TUB OF		
GOLDFISHES	<i>Thomas Gray</i>	554
THE BULL	<i>Ralph Hodgson</i>	555
TO A LOUSE ...	<i>Robert Burns</i>	562

CROSSROADS

PORTRAIT OF A LADY	<i>T. S. Eliot</i>	564
THE ROAD NOT TAKEN	<i>Robert Frost</i>	568

Contents

THE ANALYSIS OF LOVE	Herbert Read 569
WINTER LANDSCAPE	John Berryman 574

HOPE

AGAINST HOPE	Abraham Cowley 575
FOR HOPE	Richard Crashaw 576
INVICTUS.....	William Ernest Henley 578
OH YET WE TRUST THAT SOMEHOW GOOD	
	Alfred, Lord Tennyson 579
SAY NOT THE STRUGGLE NAUGHT AVAILETH	
	Arthur Hugh Clough 580
TIMES GO BY TURNS	Robert Southwell 580
AS WE RUSH	James Thomson 581

THE CHARACTER OF A HAPPY LIFE

THE CHARACTER OF A HAPPY LIFE	
	Sir Henry Wotton 582
BALADE DE BON CONSEIL.....	Geoffrey Chaucer 583
MY MIND TO ME A KINGDOM IS...	Sir Edward Dyer 585
THE CHARACTER OF THE HAPPY WARRIOR	
	William Wordsworth 586
THE QUALITY OF MERCY	William Shakespeare 589
THE WISH	Abraham Cowley 590
TO GILD REFINED GOLD.....	William Shakespeare 591
THE WILL	John Donne 592
FABLE	Ralph Waldo Emerson 594
THE BANISHED DUKE SPEAKS TO HIS RETAINERS	
	William Shakespeare 594
A POISON TREE	William Blake 595
THE MAN OF PRAYER.....	Christopher Smart 596
THE LAKE ISLE OF INNISFREE..	William Butler Yeats 597
TO A WATERFOWL	William Cullen Bryant 597

Contents

EPITAPH ON SIR PHILIP SIDNEY	
	<i>Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke</i> 674
ODE	<i>A. W. E. O'Shaughnessy</i> 676
NOT MARBLE, NOR THE GILDED MONUMENTS	
	<i>William Shakespeare</i> 677
ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER	
	<i>John Keats</i> 678

CLASS STRUGGLE

CHAPLINESQUE	<i>Hart Crane</i> 678
THIRTY BOB A WEEK	<i>John Davidson</i> 679
THE TUNNEL	<i>Hart Crane</i> 683
CONSIDER THIS AND IN OUR TIME....	<i>W. H. Auden</i> 688
FOR A' THAT AND A' THAT.....	<i>Robert Burns</i> 690
SPAIN	<i>W. H. Auden</i> 691

Part II

A Little Treasury of Jabberwocky

JABBERWOCKY	<i>Lewis Carroll</i> 697
TO THE TERRESTRIAL GLOBE....	<i>Sir W. S. Gilbert</i> 698
FOGGY, FOGGY DEW	<i>Anonymous</i> 699
THERE WAS A NAUGHTY BOY	<i>John Keats</i> 700
ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF A MAD DOG	
	<i>Oliver Goldsmith</i> 701
THE POBBLE WHO HAS NO TOES....	<i>Edward Lear</i> 703
FATHER WILLIAM	<i>Lewis Carroll</i> 704
THE LATEST DECALOGUE....	<i>Arthur Hugh Clough</i> 705

THE WALRUS AND THE CARPENTER. . .	Lewis Carroll	706
MY SHADOW	Robert Louis Stevenson	709
from SPECTATOR AB EXTRA. . .	Arthur Hugh Clough	710
LONDON BELLS	Anonymous	711
THE PESSIMIST	Ben King	713
A SONNET ON A MONKEY	Marjory Fleming	714
THREE MEN OF GOTHAM. . . .	Thomas Love Peacock	714
THE MODERN HIAWATHA	Anonymous	715
THE LOGICAL VEGETARIAN	G. K. Chesterton	716
POOR BUT HONEST	Anonymous	717
BIBLE STORIES	Anonymous	719
I SAW A PEACOCK	Anonymous	721
WHAT ARE FOLKS MADE OF	Anonymous	721
A GENTLE ECHO ON WOMAN.	Jonathan Swift	722
FRANKIE* AND JOINNY	Anonymous	723
LIMERICKS	Anonymous	727
<i>A wonderful bird is the pelican.</i>		727
<i>There was a young man of St. Bees.</i>		727
<i>There was a young lady of Spain.</i>		728
<i>There was an old party of Lyme.</i>		728
<i>A beautiful lady named Psyche.</i>		728
<i>An epicure, dining at Crewe.</i>		728
<i>There was a young fellow named Hall.</i>		728
<i>A flea and a fly in a flue.</i>		728
<i>There was an old man from Peru.</i>		729
<i>There once was a man from Nantucket.</i>		729
<i>But he followed the pair to Pawtucket.</i>		729
LIMERICKS	Edward Lear	729
<i>There was a Young Lady of Portugal.</i>		729
<i>There was an Old Man who said, "Hush!"</i>		729
MIKE O'DAY	Anonymous	730
A DENTIST	Anonymous	730
THE RAIN	Anonymous	730
SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN	Anonymous	730
WINTER IS GONE	Alfred Austin	730

I

A Little Treasury of Great Poetry

The poetry of earth

THE POETRY OF EARTH
IS NEVER DEAD

THE poetry of earth is never dead;
When all the birds are faint with the hot sun
And hide in cooling trees, a voice will run
From hedge to hedge about the new-mown mead.
That is the grasshopper's,—he takes the lead
In summer luxury,—he has never done
With his delights; for, when tired out with fun,
He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed.
The poetry of earth is ceasing never.
On a lone winter evening, when the frost
Has wrought a silence, from the stove there shrills
The cricket's song, in warmth increasing ever,
And seems, to one in drowsiness half lost,
The grasshopper's among some grassy hills.

JOHN KEATS

DAFFODILS

I WANDERED lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the Milky Way,
They stretched in never-ending line

The poetry of earth

Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

THE CLOUD

I BRING fresh showers for the thirsting flowers,
From the seas and the streams;
I bear light shade for the leaves when laid
In their noonday dreams.
From my wings are shaken the dews that waken
The sweet buds every one,
When rocked to rest on their mother's breast,
As she dances about the sun.
I wield the flail of the lashing hail,
And whiten the green plains under,
And then again I dissolve it in rain,
And laugh as I pass in thunder

I sift the snow on the mountains below,
And their great pines groan aghast;
And all the night 'tis my pillow white,
While I sleep in the arms of the blast.
Sublime on the towers of my skyey bowers,
Lightning my pilot sits;
In a cavern under is fettered the thunder,
It struggles and howls at fits;
Over earth and ocean, with gentle motion,
This pilot is guiding me,
Lured by the love of the genii that move
In the depths of the purple sea;
Over the rills, and the crags, and the hills,
Over the lakes and the plains,
Wherever he dream, under mountain or stream,
The Spirit he loves remains;
And I all the while bask in Heaven's blue smile,
Whilst he is dissolving in rains.

The sanguine Sunrise, with his meteor eyes,
And his burning plumes outspread,
Leaps on the back of my sailing rack,
When the morning star shines dead;
As on the jag of a mountain crag,
Which an earthquake rocks and swings,
An eagle alit one moment may sit
In the light of its golden wings.
And when Sunset may breathe, from the lit sea beneath,
Its ardours of rest and of love,
And the crimson pall of eve may fall
From the depth of Heaven above,
With wings folded I rest, on mine aëry nest,
As still as a brooding dove.

The poetry of earth

That orbèd maiden with white fire laden,
Whom mortals call the Moon,
Glides glimmering o'er my fleece-like floor,
By the midnight breezes strewn;
And wherever the beat of her unseen feet,
Which only the angels hear,
May have broken the wool of my tent's thin roof,
The stars peep behind her and peer;
And I laugh to see them whirl and flee,
Like a swarm of golden bees,
When I widen the rent in my wind-built tent,
Till the calm rivers, lakes, and seas,
Like strips of the sky fallen through me on high,
Are each paved with the moon and these.

I bind the Sun's throne with a burning zone,
And the Moon's with a girdle of pearl;
The volcanoes are dim, and the stars reel and swim,
When the whirlwinds my banner unfurl.
From cape to cape, with a bridge-like shape,
Over a torrent sea,
Sunbeam-proof, I hang like a roof,—
The mountains its columns be.
The triumphal arch through which I march
With hurricane, fire, and snow,
When the Powers of the air are chained to my chair.
Is the million-coloured bow;
The sphere-fire above its soft colours wove,
While the moist Earth was laughing below.

I am the daughter of Earth and Water,
And the nursling of the Sky;
I pass through the pores of the ocean and shores:
I change, but I cannot die.
For after the rain when with never a stain

is never dead

The pavilion of Heaven is bare,
And the winds and sunbeams with their convex gleams
Build up the blue dome of air,
I silently laugh at my own cenotaph,
And out of the caverns of rain,
Like a child from the womb, like a ghost from the tomb,
I arise and unbuild it again.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

INVERNAID

This darksome burn, horseback brown,
His rollrock highroad roaring down,
In coop and in comb the fleece of his foam
Flutes and low to the lake falls home.

A windpuff-bonnet of fawn-froth
Turns and twindles over the broth
Of a pool so pitchblack, fell-frowning,
It rounds and rounds Despair to drowning.

Degged with dew, dappled with dew
Are the groins of the braes that the brook treads through,
Wiry heathpacks, fitches of fern,
And the beadbonny ash that sits over the burn.

What would the world be, once bereft
Of wet and of wildness? Let them be left,
O let them be left, wildness and wet;
Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

The poetry of earth

TO ONE WHO HAS BEEN LONG
IN CITY PENT

To one who has been long in city pent,
'Tis very sweet to look into the fair
And open face of heaven,—to breathe a prayer
Full in the smile of the blue firmament.
Who is more happy, when, with heart's content,
Fatigued he sinks into some pleasant lair
Of wavy grass, and reads a *debonair*
And gentle tale of love and languishment?
Returning home at evening, with an ear
Catching the notes of Philomel,—an eye
Watching the sailing cloudlet's bright career,
He mourns that day so soon has glided by:
E'en like the passage of an angel's tear
That falls through the clear ether silently.

JOHN KEATS

ODE TO EVENING

If aught of oaten stop or pastoral song
May hope, chaste Eve, to soothe thy modest ear,
Like thy own solemn springs,
Thy springs, and dying gales;

O Nymph reserved, while now the bright-hair'd sun
Sits in yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts
With brede ethereal wove,
O'erhang his wavy bed:

is never dead

Now air is hush'd, save where the weak-eyed bat
With short shrill shriek flits by on leathern wing,
Or where the beetle winds
His small but sullen horn,

As oft he rises midst the twilight path,
Against the pilgrim borne in heedless hum,--
Now teach me, maid composed,
To breathe some soften'd strain

Whose numbers, stealing through thy dark'ning vale,
May not unseemly with its stillness suit;
As musing slow I hail
Thy genial loved return.

For when thy folding star arising shows
His paly circlet, at his warning lamp
The fragrant Hours, and Elves
Who slept in flowers the day,

And many a Nymph who wreathes her brows with sedge,
And sheds the freshening dew, and, lovelier still,
The pensive Pleasures sweet,
Prepare thy shadowy car.

Then lead, calm Votarèss, where some sheeted lake
Cheers the lone heath, or some time-hallow'd pile,
Or upland fallows grey
Reflect its last cool gleam.

Or if chill blustering winds, or driving rain,
Prevent my willing feet, be mine the hut
That, from the mountain's side,
Views wilds and swelling floods,

The poetry of earth

And hamlets brown, and dim-discovered spires;
And hears their simple bell; and marks o'er all
Thy dewy fingers draw
The gradual dusky veil.

While Spring shall pour his showers, as oft he wont,
And bathe thy breathing tresses, meekest Eve!
While Summer loves to sport
Beneath thy lingering light;

While sallow Autumn fills thy lap with leaves;
Or Winter, yelling through the troublous air,
Affrights thy shrinking train,
And rudely rends thy robes:

So long, regardful of thy quiet rule,
Shall Fancy, Friendship, Science, rose-lipp'd Health
Thy gentlest influence own,
And hymn thy favourite name!

WILLIAM COLLINS

TO AUTUMN

SEASON of mists and mellow fruitfulness!
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;
To bend with apples the mossed cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;

is never dead

To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For Summer has o'er-brimmed their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a self-reaped furrow sound asleep,
Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook;
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozeings, hours by hours

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,
While barréd clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir, the small gnats mourn
Among the river shallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-cricket sing; and now with treble soft
The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft,
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

JOHN KEATS

The poetry of earth

PRELUDE from "THE VISION
OF SIR LAUNFAL"

OVER his keys the musing organist,
Beginning doubtfully and far away,
First lets his fingers wander as they list,
And builds a bridge from Dreamland for his lay:
Then, as the touch of his loved instrument
Gives hope and fervor, nearer draws his theme,
First guessed by faint auroral flushes sent
Along the wavering vista of his dream.

Not only around our infancy
Doth heaven with all its splendors lie;
Daily, with souls that cringe and plot,
We Sinais climb and know it not.

Over our manhood bend the skies;
Against our fallen and traitor lives
The great winds utter prophecies;
With our faint hearts the mountain strives;
Its arms outstretched, the druid wood
Waits with its benedicite;
And to our age's drowsy blood
Still shouts the inspiring sea.

Earth gets its price for what Earth gives us;
The beggar is taxed for a corner to die in,
The priest hath his fee who comes and shrives us,
We bargain for the graves we lie in;
At the Devil's booth are all things sold,
Each ounce of dross costs its ounce of gold;
For a cap and bells our lives we pay,
Bubbles we buy with a whole soul's tasking:

'Tis heaven alone that is given away,
'Tis only God may be had for the asking;
No price is set on the lavish summer;
June may be had by the poorest comer.

And what is so rare as a day in June?
Then, if ever, come perfect days;
Then Heaven tries the earth if it be in tune,
And over it softly her warm ear lays;
Whether we look, or whether we listen,
We hear life murmur, or see it glisten;
Every clod feels a stir of might,
An instinct within it that reaches and towers,
And, groping blindly above it for light,
Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers;
The flush of life may well be seen
Thrilling back over hills and valleys;
The cowslip startles in meadows green,
The buttercup catches the sun in its chalice,
And there's never a leaf nor a blade too mean
To be some happy creature's palace;
The little bird sits at his door in the sun,
Atit like a blossom among the leaves, ·
And lets his illumined being o'errun
With the deluge of summer it receives;
His mate feels the eggs beneath her wings,
And the heart in her dumb breast flutters and sings;
He sings to the wide world, and she to her nest,—
In the nice ear of Nature which song is the best?

Now is the high-tide of the year,
And whatever of life hath ebbed away
Comes flooding back, with a ripply cheer,
Into every bare inlet and creek and bay;
Now the heart is so full that a drop overfills it,

The poetry of earth

We are happy now because God wills it;
No matter how barren the past may have been,
'Tis enough for us now that the leaves are green;
We sit in the warm shade and feel right well
How the sap creeps up and the blossoms swell;
We may shut our eyes, but we cannot help knowing
That skies are clear and grass is growing;
The breeze comes whispering in our ear,
That dandelions are blossoming near,
 That maize has sprouted, that streams are flowing,
That the river is bluer than the sky,
That the robin is plastering his house hard by;
And if the breeze kept the good news back,
For other couriers we should not lack;
 We could guess it all by yon heifer's lowing,—
And hark! how clear bold chanticleer,
Warmed with the new wine of the year,
 Tells all in his lusty crowing!

Joy comes, grief goes, we know not how;
Everything is happy now,
 Everything is upward striving;
'Tis as easy now for the heart to be true
As for grass to be green or skies to be blue,—
 'Tis the natural way of living:
Who knows whither the clouds have fled?
 In the unscarred heaven they leave no wake;
And the eyes forget the tears they have shed,
 The heart forgets its sorrow and ache;
The soul partakes the season's youth,
 And the sulphurous rifts of passion and woe
Lie deep 'neath a silence pure and smooth,
 Like burnt-out craters healed with snow.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

THOUGHTS IN A GARDEN

How vainly men themselves amaze
To win the palm, the oak, or bays,
And their uncessant labours see
Crown'd from some single herb or tree,
Whose short and narrow-vergèd shade
Does prudently their toils upbraid;
While all the flowers and trees do close
To weave the garlands of repose!

Fair Quiet, have I found thee here,
And Innocence thy sister dear?
Mistaken long, I sought you then
In busy companies of men:
Your sacred plants, if here below,
Only among the plants will grow:
Society is all but rude
To this delicious solitude.

No white nor red was ever seen
So amorous as this lovely green.
Fond lovers, cruel as their flame,
Cut in these trees their mistress' name:
Little, alas! they know or heed
How far these beauties hers exceed!
Fair trees! wheres'è'er your barks I wound,
No name shall but your own be found.

When we have run our passions' heat,
Love hither makes his best retreat:
The gods, that mortal beauty chase,
Still in a tree did end their race;
Apollo hunted Daphne so

The poetry of earth

Only that she might laurel grow;
And Pan did after Syrinx speed
Not as a nymph, but for a reed.

What wondrous life in this I lead!
Ripe apples drop about my head;
The luscious clusters of the vine
Upon my mouth do crush their wine;
The nectarine and curious peach
Into my hands themselves do reach;
Stumbling on melons, as I pass,
Ensnared with flowers, I fall on grass.

Meanwhile the mind from pleasure less
Withdraws into its happiness;
The mind, that Ocean where each kind
Does straight its own resemblance find;
Yet it creates, transcending these,
Far other worlds, and other seas;
Annihilating all that's made
To a green thought in a green shade.

Here at the fountain's sliding foot,
Or at some fruit-tree's mossy root,
Casting the body's vest aside,
My soul into the boughs does glide;
There, like a bird, it sits and sings,
Then whets and combs its silver wings,
And, till prepared for longer flight,
Waves in its plumes the various light.

Such was that happy Garden-state
While man there walk'd without a mate:
After a place so pure and sweet,
What other help could yet be meet!

is never dead

But 'twas beyond a mortal's share
To wander solitary there:
Two paradises 'twere in one,
To live in Paradise alone.

How well the skilful gard'ner drew
Of flowers and herbs this dial new!
Where, from above, the milder sun
Does through a fragrant zodiac run:
And, as it works, th' industrious bee
Computes its time as well as we.
How could such sweet and wholesome hours
Be reckon'd, but with herbs and flowers!

ANDREW MARVELL

ODE TO THE WEST WIND

O WILD West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,
Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O thou,
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed
The wingéd seeds, where they lie cold and low,
Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow
Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
With living hues and odours plain and hill:
Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;
Destroyer and preserver; hear, oh, hear!

The poetry of earth

Thou on whose stream, mid the steep sky's commotion,
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
Shook from the tangled boughs of Heaven and Ocean,
Angels of rain and lightning: there are spread
On the blue surface of thine aëry surge,
Like the bright hair uplifted from the head
Of some fierce Maenad, even from the dime verge
Of the horizon to the zenith's height,
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge
Of the dying year, to which this closing night
Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,
Vaulted with all thy congregated might
Of vapours, from whose solid atmosphere
Black rain, and fire, and hail, will burst: O hear!

Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
Lull'd by the coil of his crystalline streams,
Beside a pumice isle in Baïæ's bay,
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,
All overgrown with azure moss, and flowers
So sweet, the sense faints picturing them! Thou
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers
Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean, know
Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with fear,
And tremble and despoil themselves: O hear!

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share
The impulse of thy strength, only less free
Than thou, O uncontrollable! if even

52

is never dead

I were as in my boyhood, and could be
The comrade of thy wanderings over heaven,
As then, when to outstrip thy skiey speed
Scarce seem'd a vision—I would ne'er have striven
As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
Oh, lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!
A heavy weight of hours has chained and bowed
One too like thee: tameless, and swift, and proud.

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is;
What if my leaves are falling like its own!
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies
Will take from both a deep, autumnal tone,
Sweet, though in sadness. Be thou, spirit fierce,
My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!
Drive my dead thoughts over the universe
Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth!
And, by the incantation of this verse,
Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!
Be through my lips to unawakened earth
The trumpet of a prophecy! O Wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

GRASS

A CHILD said *What is the grass?* fetching it to me with full
hands,
How could I answer the child? I do not know what it is
any more than he.

The poetry of earth

I guess it must be the flag of my disposition, out of hopeful green stuff woven.

Or I guess it is the handkerchief of the Lord,
A scented gift and remembrancer designedly dropt,
Bearing the owner's name some way in the corners, that
we may see and remark, and say *Whose?*

Or I guess the grass is itself a child, the produced babe of the vegetation.

Or I guess it is a uniform hieroglyphic,
And it means, Sprouting alike in broad zones and narrow zones,
Growing among black folks as among white,
Kanuck, Tuckahoe, Congressman, Cuff, I give them the same,
I receive them the same.

And now it seems to me the beautiful uncut hair of graves.

Tenderly will I use you curling grass,
It may be you transpire from the breasts of young men,
It may be if I had known them I would have loved them,
It may be you are from old people, or from offspring taken
soon out of their mothers' laps,
And here you are the mothers' laps.

This grass is very dark to be from the white heads of old mothers,
Darker than the colorless beards of old men,
Dark to come from under the faint red roofs of mouths.

O I perceive after all so many uttering tongues,
And I perceive they do not come from the roofs of mouths
for nothing.

is never dead

I wish I could translate the hints about the dead young
men and women,
And the hints about old men and mothers, and the off-
spring taken soon out of their laps.

What do you think has become of the young and old men?
And what do you think has become of the women and
children?

They are alive and well somewhere,
The smallest sprout shows there is really no death,
And if ever there was it led forward life, and does not
wait at the end to arrest it,
And ceas'd the moment life appear'd.

All goes onward and outward, nothing collapses,
And to die is different from what any one supposed, and
luckier.

WALT WHITMAN

UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE

EARTH has not anything to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth like a garment wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.

The poetry of earth

Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendor valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE

UNDER the greenwood tree,
Who loves to lie with me,
And tune his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat,
Come hither, come hither, come hither—
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

Who doth ambition shun,
And loves to live i' the sun,
Seeking the food he eats,
And pleased with what he gets,
Come hither, come hither, come hither—
Here shall he see
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WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

THE SEA

THERE is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
THERE is a rapture on the lonely shore,
THERE is society where none intrudes
By the deep sea, and music in its roar:
I love not man the less, but nature more,
From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean,—roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin,—his control
Stops with the shore;—upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknelled, uncoffined, and unknown.

His steps are not upon thy paths,—thy fields
Are not a spoil for him,—thou dost arise
And shake him from thee; the vile strength he wields
For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,
And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray
And howling, to his gods, where haply lies
His petty hope in some near port or bay,
And dashest him again to earth:—there let him lay.

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake

The poetry of earth

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The armaments which thunderstrike the walls
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The poetry of earth

And monarchs tremble in their capitals.
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make
Their clay creator the vain title take
Of lord of thee and arbiter of war,—
These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar
Alike the Armada's pride or spoils of Trafalgar.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee;
Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?
Thy waters wasted them while they were free,
And many a tyrant since; their shores obey
The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay
Has dried up realms to deserts: not so thou;
Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play,
Time writes no wrinkles on thine azure brow;
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,
Calm or convulsed,—in breeze, or gale, or storm,
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
Dark-heaving; boundless, endless, and sublime,
The image of Eternity,—the throne
Of the Invisible! even from out thy slime
The monsters of the deep are made; each zone
Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward; from a boy
I wantoned with thy breakers,—they to me
Were a delight; and if the freshening sea
Made them a terror, 'twas a pleasing fear;

Spring

For I was as it were a child of thee,
And trusted to thy billows far and near,
And laid my hand upon thy mane,—as I do here.

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON

HOME-THOUGHTS FROM
ABROAD

Oh, to be in England
Now that April's there,
And whoever wakes in England
Sees, some morning, unaware,
That the lowest boughs and the brush-wood sheaf
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough
In England—now!

And after April, when May follows,
And the whitethroat builds, and all the swallows—
Hark! where my blossomed pear-tree in the hedge
Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent-spray's edge—
That's the wise thrush; he sings each song twice over,
Lest you should think he never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture!
And though the fields look rough with hoary dew,
All will be gay when noontide wakes anew
The buttercups, the little children's dower,
—Far brighter than this gaudy melon-flower!

ROBERT BROWNING

Spring

SPRING

SPRING, the sweet Spring, is the year's pleasant king;
Then blooms each thing, then maids dance in a ring,
Cold doth not sting, the pretty birds do sing—
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-wool!

The palm and may make country houses gay,
Lambs frisk and play, the shepherds pipe all day,
And we hear aye birds tune this merry lay—
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-wool!

The fields breathe sweet, the daisies kiss our feet,
Young lovers meet, old wives a-sunning sit,
In every street these tunes our ears do greet—
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-wool!
Spring, the sweet Spring!

THOMAS NASHE

TO THE CUCKOO

O BLITHE New-comer! I have heard,
I hear thee and rejoice:
O Cuckoo! shall I call thee Bird,
Or but a wandering Voice?

While I am lying on the grass
Thy twofold shout I hear;
From hill to hill it seems to pass,
At once far off and near.

Spring

Though babbling only to the vale
Of sunshine and of flowers,
Thou bringest unto me a tale
Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring!
Even yet thou art to me
No bird, but an invisible thing,
A voice, a mystery

The same whom in my school-boy days
I listen'd to; that Cry
Which made me look a thousand ways
In bush, and tree, and sky.

To seek thee did I often rove
Through woods and on the green;
And thou wert still a hope, a love;
Still long'd for, never seen.

And I can listen to thee yet;
Can lie upon the plain
And listen, till I do beget
That golden time again.

O blessèd Bird! the earth we pace
Again appears to be
An unsubstantial, faery place,
That is fit home for Thee!

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Spring

WRITTEN IN MARCH

THE Cock is crowing,
The stream is flowing,
The small birds twitter,
The lake doth glitter,
The green field sleeps in the sun;
The oldest and youngest
Are at work with the strongest;
The cattle are grazing,
Their heads never raising,
There are forty feeding like one!

Like an army defeated
The snow hath retreated,
And now doth fare ill
On the top of the bare hill;
The ploughboy is whooping—anon—anon
There's joy in the mountains,
There's life in the fountains,
Small clouds are sailing
Blue sky prevailing,
The rain is over and gone!

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

IT WAS A LOVER AND HIS LASS

It was a lover and his lass,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
That o'er the green corn-field did pass,
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,

Spring

When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding;
Sweet lovers love the spring.

Between the acres of the rye,

With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
These pretty country folks would lie,

In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding;
Sweet lovers love the spring.

This carol they began that hour,

With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
How that life was but a flower

In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding;
Sweet lovers love the spring.

And, therefore, take the present time

With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
For love is crownèd with the prime

In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding;
Sweet lovers love the spring.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

FROM YOU HAVE I BEEN ABSENT

FROM you have I been absent in the spring,
When proud-pied April, dress'd in all his trim,
Hath put a spirit of youth in everything,
That heavy Saturn laugh'd and leap'd with him.
Yet nor the lays of birds, nor the sweet smell

Spring

Of different flowers in odour and in hue,
Could make me any summer's story tell,
Or from their proud lap pluck them where they grew;
Nor did I wonder at the lily's white,
Nor praise the deep vermilion in the rose;
They were but sweet, but figures of delight,
Drawn after you, you pattern of all those.
Yet seem'd it winter still, and, you away,
As with your shadow I with these did play.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

PIPPA'S SONG

THE year 's at the spring,
And day 's at the morn;
Morning 's at seven;
The hill-side 's dew-pearl'd;
The lark 's on the wing;
The snail 's on the thorn;
God 's in His heaven—
All 's right with the world!

ROBERT BROWNING

CUCKOO SONG

SUMER is icumen in,
Lhudé sing cuccu!
Groweth sed, and bloweth med,
And springeth the wude nu—
Sing cuccu!

Beginnings

Awó hloteth after lomb,
Lhouth after calvé cu;
Bulluc sterteth, bucké verteth,
Murie sing cuccu!

Cuccu, cuccu, well singés thu, cuccu:
Ne swike thu naver nu;
Sing cuccu, nu, sing cuccu,
Sing cuccu, sing cuccu, nu!

ANON

TO A FRIEND WHOSE WORK
HAS COME TO NOTHING

Now all the truth is out,
Be secret and take defeat
From any brazen throat,
For how can you compete,
Being honor bred, with one
Who, were it proved he lies,
Were neither shamed in his own
Nor in his neighbors' eyes?
Bred to a harder thing
Than Triumph, turn away
And like a laughing string
Whereon mad fingers play
Amid a place of stone,
Be secret and exult,
Because of all things known
That is most difficult.

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

Beginnings

HARK! HARK! THE LARK

HARK! hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
And Phoebus gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
On chaliced flowers that lies;
And winking Mary-buds begin
To ope their golden eyes;
With everything that pretty bin,
My lady sweet, arisel
Arise, arisel

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

BEATA L'ALMA

Beata Palma, ove non corre tempo.

MICHELANGELO

I

TIME ends when vision sees its lapse in
liberty. The seven
sleepers quit their den and wild
lament-
ations fill our voiceless bodies. Echoes only are.

You will never understand the mind's
misanthropy, nor see
that all is foul and fit to
screech in.
It is an eye's anarchy: men are ghoulish stumps

Beginnings

and the air a river of opaque
filth. God! I cannot see
to design these stark reaches, these
bulging
contours pressed against me in the maddening dark.

A blindman's buff and no distilling
of song for the woeful
scenes of agony. Never
will rest
the mind an instant in its birdlike flutterings.

Could I impress my voice on the plas-
tic darkness, or lift an
inviolate lanthorn from
a ship
in the storm I might have ease. But why? No fellows

would answer my hullallo, and my
lanthorn would lurch on the
mast till it dipped under the
wet waves
and the hissing darkness healed the wide wound of light.

A cynic race—to bleak ecstasies
we are driven by our
sombre destiny. Men's shouts
are not
glad enough to echo in our groined hearts. We know

war and its dead, and famine's bleached bones;
black rot overreaching
the silent pressure of life
in fronds
of green ferns and in the fragile shell of white flesh.

Beginnings

HARK! HARK! THE LARK

HARK! hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
And Phoebus gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
On chaliced flowers that lies;
And winking Mary-buds begin
To ope their golden eyes;
With everything that pretty bin,
My lady sweet, arise!
Arise, arise!

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

BEATA L'ALMA

Beata l'alma, ove non corre tempo.

MICHELANGELO

I

TIME ends when vision sees its lapse in
liberty. The seven
sleepers quit their den and wild
lament-
ations fill our voiceless bodies. Echoes only are.

You will never understand the mind's
misanthropy, nor see
that all is foul and fit to
screech in.
It is an eye's anarchy: men are ghoulish stumps

Beginnings

and the air a river of opaque
filth. God! I cannot see
to design these stark reaches, these
bulging
contours pressed against me in the maddening dark.

A blindman's buff and no distilling
of song for the woeful
scenes of agony. Never
will rest
the mind an instant in its birdlike flutterings.

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black rot overreaching
the silent pressure of life
in fronds
of green ferns and in the fragile shell of white flesh.

Beginnings

II

New children must be born of gods in
a deathless land, where the
uneroded rocks bound clear
from cool
glassy tarns, and no flaw is in mind or flesh.

Sense and image they must refashion—
they will not recreate
love: love ends in hate; they will
not use
words: words lie. The structure of events alone is

comprehensible and to single
perceptions communication
is not essential.
Art ends;
the individual world alone is valid

and that gives ease. The water is still;
the rocks are hard and veined,
metalliferous, yielding
an ore
of high worth. In the sky the unsullied sun lake.

HERBERT READ

THE RAINBOW

My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky:
So was it when my life began;

So is it now I am a man;
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die!
The Child is father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

THE ROOM

THROUGH that window—all else being extinct
Except itself and me—I saw the struggle
Of darkness against darkness. Within the room
It turned and turned, dived downward. Then I saw
How order might—if chaos wished—become:
And saw the darkness crush upon itself,
Contracting powerfully; it was as if
It killed itself: slowly: and with much pain.
Pain. The scene was pain, and nothing but pain.
What else, when chaos draws all forces inward
To shape a single leaf? . . .

For the leaf came,
Alone and shining in the empty room;
After a while the twig shot downward from it;
And from the twig a bough; and then the trunk,
Massive and coarse; and last the one black root.
The black root cracked the walls. Boughs burst the window:
The great tree took possession.

Beginnings

Tree of trees!
Remember (when time comes) how chaos died
To shape the shining leaf. Then turn, have courage,
Wrap arms and roots together, be convulsed
With grief, and bring back chaos out of shape.
I will be watching then as I watch now.
I will praise darkness now, but then the leaf.

CONRAD AIKEN

AMONG SCHOOL CHILDREN

I WALK through the long schoolroom questioning;
A kind old nun in a white hood replies;
The children learn to cipher and to sing,
To study reading-books and history,
To cut and sew, be neat in everything
In the best modern way—the children's eyes
In momentary wonder stare upon
A sixty-year-old smiling public man.

I dream of a Ledaean body, bent
Above a sinking fire, a tale that she
Told of a harsh reproof, or trivial event
That changed some childish day to tragedy—
Told, and it seemed that our two natures blent
Into a sphere from youthful sympathy,
Or else, to alter Plato's parable,
Into the yolk and the white of one shell.

And thinking of that fit of grief or rage
I look upon one child or t'other there
And wonder if she stood so at that age—

For even daughters of the swan can share
Something of every paddler's heritage—
And had that color upon cheek or hair,
And thereupon my heart is driven wild:
She stands before me as a living child.

Her present image floats into the mind—
Did Quattrocento finger fashion it
Hollow of cheek as though it drank the wind
And took a mess of shadows for its meat?
And I though never of Ledaean kind
Had pretty plumage once—enough of that,
Better to smile on all that smile, and show
There is a comfortable kind of scarecrow.

What youthful mother, a shape upon her lap
Honey of generation had betrayed,
And that must sleep, shriek, struggle to escape
As recollection or the drug decide,
Would think her son, did she but see that shape
With sixty or more winters on its head,
A compensation for the pang of his birth,
Or the uncertainty of his setting forth?

Plato thought nature but a spume that plays
Upon a ghostly paradigm of things;
Solider Aristotle played the taws
Upon the bottom of a king of kings;
World-famous golden-thighed Pythagoras
Fingered upon a liddle-stick or strings
What a star sang and careless Muses heard:
Old clothes upon old sticks to scare a bird.

Both nuns and mothers worship images,
But those the candles light are not as those

Beginnings

That animate a mother's reveries,
But keep a marble or a bronze repose.
And yet they too break hearts—O Presences
That passion, piety or affection knows,
And that all heavenly glory symbolize—
O self-born mockers of man's enterprise;

Labor is blossoming or dancing where
The body is not bruised to pleasure soul,
Nor beauty born out of its own despair,
Nor blear-eyed wisdom out of midnight oil.
O chestnut tree, great rooted blossomer,
Are you the leaf, the blossom or the bole?
O body swayed to music, O brightening glance,
How can we know the dancer from the dance?

W. B. YEATS

THE ROAD

THERE is a road that turning always
Cuts off the country of Again.
Archers stand there on every side
And as it runs Time's deer is slain,
And lies where it has lain.

That busy clock shows never an hour.
All flies and all in flight must tarry.
The hunter shoots the empty air

Beginnings

Far on before the quarry,
Which falls though nothing's there to parry.

The lion couching in the centre
With mountain head and sunset brow
Rolls down the everlasting slope
Bones picked an age ago,
And the bones rise up and go.

There the beginning finds the end
Before beginning ever can be,
And the great runner never leaves
The starting and the finishing tree,
The budding and the fading tree.

There the ship sailing safe in harbour
Long since in many a sea was drowned.
The treasure burning in her hold
So near will never be found,
Sunk past all sound.

There a man on a summer evening
Reclines at ease upon his tomb
And is his mortal effigy.
And there within the womb,
The cell of doom,

The ancestral deed is thought and done,
And in a million Edens fall
A million Adams drowned in darkness
For small is great and great is small,
And a blind seed all.

EDWIN MUIR

THE RETREAT

HAPPY those early days, when I
Shin'd in my Angel-infancy!
Before I understood this place
Appointed for my second race,
Or taught my soul to fancy aught
But a white celestial thought:
When yet I had not walk'd above
A mile or two from my first Love,
And looking back—at that short space—
Could see a glimpse of His bright face:
When on some gilded cloud, or flow'r,
My gazing soul would dwell an hour,
And in those weaker glories spy
Some shadows of eternity:
Before I taught my tongue to wound
My Conscience with a sinful sound,
Or had the black art to dispense
A several sin to ev'ry sense,
But felt through all this fleshly dress
Bright shoots of everlastingness.

O how I long to travel back,
And tread again that ancient track!
That I might once more reach that plain
Where first I left my glorious train;
From whence th' enlightened spirit sees
That shady City of Palm-trees.
But ah! my soul with too much stay
Is drunk, and staggers in the way!
Some men a forward motion love,
But I by backward steps would move;
And when this dust falls to the urn,
In that state I came, return.

HENRY VAUGHAN

W O N D E R

How like an angel came I down!
How bright are all things here!
When first among his works I did appear,
Oh, how their glory did me crown!
The world resembled his eternity,
In which my soul did walk;
And ev'rything that I did see
Did with me talk.

The skies in their magnificence,
The lovely lively air,
Oh, how divine, how soft, how sweet, how fair!
The stars did entertain my sense,
And all the works of God so bright and pure,
So rich and great, did seem,
As if they ever must endure
In my esteem.

A native health and innocence
Within my bones did grow,
And while my God did all his glories show,
I felt a vigor in my sense
That was all spirit; I within did flow
With seas of life like wine;
I nothing in the world did know,
But 'twas divine.

Harsh rugged objects were concealed;
Oppressions, tears, and cries,
Sins, griefs, complaints, dissensions, weeping eyes,
Were hid, and only things revealed
Which heavenly spirits and the angels prize:

Beginnings

The state of innocence
And bliss, not trades and poverties,
Did fill my sense.

The streets seemed paved with golden stones,
The boys and girls all mine—
To me how did their lovely faces shine!
The sons of men all holy ones,
In joy and beauty then appeared to me;
And ev'rything I found,
While like an angel I did see,
Adorned the ground.

Rich diamonds, and pearl, and gold
Might ev'rywhere be seen;
Rare colors, yellow, blue, red, white, and green,
Mine eyes on ev'ry side behold;
All that I saw a wonder did appear,
Amazement was my bliss,
That and my wealth met ev'rywhere;
No joy to this!

Cursed, ill-devised proprieties,
With envy, avarice,
And fraud, those fiends that spoil ev'n paradise,
Were not the object of mine eyes;
Nor hedges, ditches, limits, narrow bounds,
I dreamt not aught of those,
But in surveying all men's grounds
I found repose.

For property itself was mine,
And hedges, ornaments,
Walls, houses, coffers, and their rich contents,
To make me rich combine.

Clothes, costly jewels, lace, I esteemed
My wealth, by others worn,
For me they all to wear they seemed,
When I was born.

THOMAS TRAHERNE

LOCKSLEY HALL

COMRADES, leave me here a little, while as yet 'tis early
morn:
Leave me here, and when you want me, sound upon the
bugle horn.

'Tis the place, and all around it, as of old, the curlews call,
Dreary gleams about the moorland flying over Locksley
Hall;

*Locksley Hall, that in the distance overlooks the sandy
tracts,*
And the hollow ocean-ridges roaring into cataracts.

Many a night from yonder ivied casement, ere I went to
rest,
Did I look on great Orion sloping slowly to the West.

Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising thro' the mellow
shade,
Glitter like a swarm of fire-flies tangled in a silver braid.

Here about the beach I wander'd, nourishing a youth
sublime
With the fairy tales of science, and the long result of
Time;

Spirit of Man

When the centuries behind me like a fruitful land re-
posed;
When I clung to all the present for the promise that it
closed:

When I dipt into the future far as human eye could see;
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that
would be.—

In the Spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's
breast;
In the Spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another
crest;

In the Spring a livelier iris changes on the burnish'd dove;
In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to
thoughts of love.

Then her cheek was pale and thinner than should be for
one so young.
And her eyes on all my motions with a mute observance
hung.

And I said, "My cousin Amy, speak, and speak the truth
to me,
Trust me, cousin, all the current of my being sets to thee."

On her pallid cheek and forehead came a colour and a
light,
As I have seen the rosy red flushing in the northern night.

And she turn'd—her bosom shaken with a sudden storm
of sighs—
All the spirit deeply dawning in the dark of hazel eyes—
78

Spirit of man

Saying, "I have hid my feelings, fearing they should do
me wrong;"

Saying, "Dost thou love me, cousin?" weeping, "I have
loved thee long."

Love took up the glass of Time, and turn'd it in his glow-
ing hands;
Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden sands.

Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords
with might;
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, pass'd in music
out of sight.

Many a morning on the moorland did we hear the cosses
ring,
And her whisper throng'd my pulses with the fullness of
the Spring.

Many an evening by the waters did we watch the stately
ships,
And our spirits rush'd together at the touching of the lips.

O my cousin, shallow-hearted! O my Amy, mine no more!
O the dreary, dreary moorland! O the barren, barren
shore!

Falser than all fancy fathoms, falser than all songs have
sung,
Puppet to a father's threat, and servile to a shrewish
tongue!

Is it well to wish thee happy?—having known me—to
decline

Spirit of Man

On a range of lower feelings and a narrower heart than mine!

Yet it shall be: thou shalt lower to his level day by day,
What is fine within thee growing coarse to sympathize
with clay.

As the husband is, the wife is: thou art mated with a
clown,
And the grossness of his nature will have weight to drag
thee down.

He will hold thee, when his passion shall have spent its
novel force,
Something better than his dog, a little dearer than his
horse.

What is this? his eyes are heavy: think not they are glazed
with wine.
Go to him: it is thy duty: kiss him: take his hand in thine.

It may be my lord is weary, that his brain is over-wrought:
Soothe him with thy finer fancies, touch him with thy
lighter thought.

He will answer to the purpose, easy things to understand—
Better thou wert dead before me, tho' I slew thee with my
hand!

Better thou and I were lying, hidden from the heart's
disgrace,
Roll'd in one another's arms, and silent in a last embrace.

Cursed be the social wants that sin against the strength
of youth!

Spirit of man

Cursed be the social lies that warp up from the living
truth!

Cursed be the sickly forms that err from honest Nature's
rule!

Cursed be the gold that gilds the straiten'd forehead of
the fool!

Well—'tis well that I should bluster!—Hadst thou less
unworthy proved—

Would to God—for I had loved thee more than ever wife
was loved.

Am I mad, that I should cherish that which bears but
bitter fruit?

I will pluck it from my bosom, tho' my heart be at the
root.

Never, tho' my mortal summers to such length of years
should come

As the many-winter'd crow that leads the clanging rook-
ery home.

Where is comfort? in division of the records of the mind?
Can I part her from herself, and love her, as I knew her,
kind?

I remember one that perish'd: sweetly did she speak and
move;

Such a one do I remember, whom to look at was to love.

Can I think of her as dead, and love her for the love she
bore?

No—she never loved me truly: love is love for evermore.

Spirit of Man

Comfort? comfort scorn'd of devils! this is truth the poet
sings,
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier
things.

Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it, lest thy heart be
put to proof,
In the dead unhappy night, and when the rain is on the
roof.

Like a dog, he hunts in dreams, and thou art staring at the
wall,
Where the dying night-lamp flickers, and the shadows
rise and fall.

Then a hand shall pass before thee, pointing to his
drunken sleep,
To thy widow'd marriage-pillows, to the tears that thou
wilt weep.

Thou shalt hear the "Never, never," whisper'd by the
phantom years,
And a song from out the distance in the ringing of thine
ears;

And an eye shall vex thee, looking ancient kindness on
thy pain.
Turn thee, turn thee on thy pillow: get thee to thy rest
again.

Nay, but Nature brings thee solace; for a tender voice will
cry.
'Tis a purer life than thine; a lip to drain thy trouble dry.

Baby lips will laugh me down: my latest rival brings thee
rest.

Spirit of man

Baby fingers, waxen louches, press me from the mother's breast.

O, the child too clothes the father with a dearness not his due.

Half is thine and half is his: it will be worthy of the two.

O, I see thee old and formal, fitted to thy petty part,
With a little hoard of maxims preaching down a daughter's heart.

"They were dangerous guides the feelings—she herself
was not exempt—
Truly, she herself had suffer'd"—Perish in thy self-contempt!

Overlive it—lower yet—be happy! wherefore should I
care?

I myself must mix with action, lest I wither by despair.

What is that which I should turn to, lighting upon days
like these?

Every door is barr'd with gold, and opens but to golden
keys.

Every gate is throng'd with suitors, all the markets overflow.

I have but an angry fancy: what is that which I should do?

I had been content to perish, falling on the foe's
ground,

When the ranks are roll'd in vapour, and the winds are
laid with sound.

But the jingling of the guinea helps the hurt that Honour
feels,

Spirit of Man

And the nations do but murmur, snarling at each other's
heels.

Can I but relive in sadness? I will turn that earlier page,
Hide me from my deep emotion, O thou wondrous
Mother-Agel

Make me feel the wild pulsation that I felt before the
strife,
When I heard my days before me, and the tumult of my
life;

Yearning for the large excitement that the coming years
would yield,
Eager-hearted as a boy when first he leaves his father's
field,

And at night along the dusky highway near and nearer
drawn,
Sees in heaven the light of London flaring like a dreary
dawn;

And his spirit leaps within him to be gone before him
then,
Underneath the light he looks at, in among the throngs
of men;

Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping some-
thing new:
That which they have done but earnest of the things that
they shall do:

For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that
would be;

Spirit of man

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic
sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly
bales;

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rain'd a
ghastly dew
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central
blue;

Far along the world-wide whisper of the south-wind rush-
ing warm,
With the standards of the peoples plunging thro' the
thunder storm;

Till the war-drum throbb'd no longer, and the battle
flags were furl'd
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.

There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm
in awe,
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law.

So I triumph'd, ere my passion sweeping thro' me left me
dry,
Left me with the palsied heart, and left me with the
jaundiced eye;

Eye, to which all order festers, all things here are out of
joint,
Science moves, but slowly slowly, creeping on from point
to point;

Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion, creeping nigher,
Glares at one that nods and winks behind a slowly-dying
fire.

Spirit of Man

Yet I doubt not thro' the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widen'd with the process of
the suns.

What is that to him that reaps not harvest of his youthful
joys,
Tho' the deep heart of existence beat for ever like a boy's?

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I linger on
the shore,
And the individual withers, and the world is more and
more.

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and he bears a
laden breast,
Full of sad experience, moving toward the stillness of his
rest.

Hark, my merry comrades call me, sounding on the bugle-
horn,
They to whom my foolish passion were a target for their
scorn:

Shall it not be scorn to me to harp on such a moulder'd
string?
I am shamed thro' all my nature to have loved so slight a
thing.

Weakness to be wroth with weakness! woman's pleasure,
woman's pain—
Nature made them blinder motions bounded in a shal-
lower brain:

Woman is the lesser man, and all thy passions, match'd
with mine,

Spirit of man

Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine—

Here at least, where nature sickens, nothing. Ah, for some
retreat

Deep in yonder shining Orient, where my life began to
beat;

Where in wild Mahratta-battle fell my father evil-starr'd;—
I was left a trampled orphan, and a selfish uncle's ward.

Or to burst all links of habit—there to wander far away,
On from island unto island at the gateways of the day.

Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy
skies,

Breadths of tropic shade and palms in cluster, knots of
Paradise.

Never comes the trader, never floats an European flag,
Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland, swings the trailer
from the crag;

Droops the heavy-blossom'd bower, hangs the heavy-
fruited tree—

Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-purple spheres of sea.

There methinks would be enjoyment more than in this
march of mind,

In the steamship, in the railway, in the thoughts that
shake mankind.

There the passions cramp'd no longer shall have scope
and breathing-space;

I will take some savage woman, she shall rear my dusky
race.

Spirit of Man

Iron-jointed, supple-sinew'd, they shall dive, and they
shall run,
Catch the wild goat by the hair, and hurl their lances in
the sun;

Whistle back the parrot's call, and leap the rainbows of
the brooks,
Not with blinded eyesight poring over miserable books—

Fool, again the dream, the fancy! but I *know* my words
are wild,
But I count the gray barbarian lower than the Christian
child.

I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant of our glorious
gains,
Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a hoast with lower
pains!

Mated with a squalid savage—what to me were sun or
clime?
I the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files of time—

I that rather held it better men should perish one by one,
Than that earth should stand at gaze like Joshua's moon
in Ajalon!

Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us
range.
Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves
of change.

Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger
day:
Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.

Spirit of man

Mother-Age (for mine I knew not) help me as when life
begun:
Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash the lightnings,
weigh the Sun—

O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit hath not set.
Ancient founts of inspiration well thro' all my fancy yet.

Howsoever these things be, a long farewell to Locksley
Hall!
Now for me the woods may wither, now for me the roof-
tree fall.

Comes a vapour from the margin, blackening over heath
andholt,
Cramming all the blast before it, in its breast a thunder-
bolt.

Let it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain or hail, or fire or
snow;
For the mighty wind arises, roaring seaward, and I go.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

THE WOLVES

THERE are wolves in the next room waiting
With heads bent low, thrust out, breathing
At nothing in the dark: between them and me
A white door patched with light from the hall
Where it seems never (so still is the house)
A man has walked from the front door to the stair.

Spirit of Man

It has all been forever. A beast claws the floor.
I have brooded on angels and archfiends
But no man has ever sat where the next room's
Crowded with wolves, and for the honor of man
I affirm that never have I before. Now while
I have looked for the evening star at a cold window
And whistled when Arcturus spilt his light,
I've heard the wolves scuffle, and said: So this
Is man; so—what better conclusion is there—
The day will not follow night, and the heart
Of man has a little dignity, but less patience
Than a wolf's, and a duller sense that cannot
Smell its own mortality. (This and other
Meditations will be suited to other times
After dog silence howls my epitaph)
Now remember courage, go to the door,
Open it and see whether coiled on the bed
Or cringing by the wall a savage beast
Maybe with golden hair, with deep eyes
Like a bearded spider on a sunlit floor,
Will snarl—and man can never be alone.

ALLEN TATE

BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF YEARS

BEFORE the beginning of years
There came to the making of man
Time, with a gift of tears;
Grief, with a glass that ran;
Pleasure, with pain for leaven;
Summer, with flowers that fell;

Spirit of man

Remembrance fallen from heaven,
And madness risen from hell;
Strength without hands to smite;
Love that endures for a breath;
Night, the shadow of light,
And life, the shadow of death.
And the high gods took in hand
Fire, and the falling of tears,
And a measure of sliding sand
From under the feet of the years;
And froth and drift of the sea;
And dust of the labouring earth;
And bodies of things to be
In the houses of death and of birth;
And wrought with weeping and laughter,
And fashion'd with loathing and love,
With life before and after
And death beneath and above,
For a day and a night and a morrow,
That his strength might endure for a span
With travail and heavy sorrow,
The holy spirit of man.

From the winds of the north and the south
They gather'd as unto strife;
They breathed upon his mouth,
They filled his body with life;
Eyesight and speech they wrought
For the veils of the soul therein,
A time for labour and thought,
A time to serve and to sin;
They gave him light in his ways,
And love, and a space for delight,
And beauty and length of days,
And night, and sleep in the night.

Spirit of Man

His speech is a burning fire;
With his lips he travaileth;
In his heart is a blind desire,
In his eyes foreknowledge of death;
He weaves, and is clothed with derision;
Sows, and he shall not reap;
His life is a watch or a vision
Between a sleep and a sleep.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

THE SOLITUDE OF
ALEXANDER SELKIRK

I AM monarch of all I survey,
My right there is none to dispute;
From the centre all round to the sea
I am lord of the fowl and the brute.
O solitude! where are the charms
That sages have seen in thy face?
Better dwell in the midst of alarms
Than reign in this horrible place.

I am out of humanity's reach,
I must finish my journey alone,
Never hear the sweet music of speech;
I start at the sound of my own.
The beasts, that roam over the plain,
My form with indifference see;
They are so unacquainted with man,
Their tameness is shocking to me.

Society, friendship, and love,
Divinely bestowed upon man,
Oh, had I the wings of a dove,
How soon would I taste you again!
My sorrows I then might assuage
In the ways of religion and truth,
Might learn from the wisdom of age,
And be cheered by the sallies of youth.

Ye winds, that have made me your sport.
Convey to this desolate shore
Some cordial endearing report
Of a land I shall visit no more.
My friends, do they now and then send
A wish or a thought after me?
O tell me I yet have a friend,
Though a friend I am never to see.

How fleet is a glance of the mind!
Compared with the speed of its flight,
The tempest itself lags behind,
And the swift-winged arrows of light.
When I think of my own native land,
In a moment I seem to be there;
But alas! recollection at hand
Soon hurries me back to despair.

But the seafowl is gone to her nest,
The beast is laid down in his lair;
Even here is a season of rest,
And I to my cabin repair.
There is mercy in every place;
And mercy, encouraging thought!
Gives even affliction a grace,
And reconciles man to his lot.

WILLIAM COWPER

Spirit of Man

I THINK CONTINUALLY OF
THOSE WHO WERE
TRULY GREAT

I THINK continually of those who were truly great.
Who, from the womb, remembered the soul's history
Through corridors of light where the hours are suns
Endless and singing. Whose lovely ambition
Was that their lips, still touched with fire,
Should tell of the Spirit clothed from head to foot in song.
And who hoarded from the Spring branches
The desires falling across their bodies like blossoms.

What is precious is never to forget
The essential delight of the blood drawn from ageless
springs
Breaking through rocks in worlds before our earth.
Never to deny its pleasure in the morning simple light
Nor its grave evening demand for love.
Never to allow gradually the traffic to smother
With noise and fog the flowering of the spirit.

Near the snow, near the sun, in the highest fields
See how these names are fêted by the waving grass
And by the streamers of white cloud
And whispers of wind in the listening sky.
The names of those who in their lives fought for life
Who wore at their hearts the fire's centre.
Born of the sun they travelled a short while towards the
sun,
And left the vivid air signed with their honour.

STEPHEN SPENDER

ODE ON A GRECIAN URN

THOU still unravished bride of quietness
Thou foster-child of Silence and slow Time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape
Of deities or mortals, or of both,
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
What men or gods are these? What maidens loath?
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endeared,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
And, happy melodist, unwearied,
For ever piping songs for ever new;
More happy love! more happy, happy love!
For ever warm and still to be enjoyed,
For ever panting and for ever young;
All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high sorrowful and cloyed,
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

Beauty is truth,

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?
What little town by river or sea-shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of its folk, this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

O Attic shapel Fair attitude! with brede
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou, silent form! dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
"Beauty is truth, truth beauty,"—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

JOHN KEATS

A THING OF BEAUTY IS A JOY FOR EVER

A THING of beauty is a joy for ever:
Its loveliness increases; it will never
Pass into nothingness; but still will keep
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep

truth beauty

Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing
Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing
A flowery band to bind us to the earth,
Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,
Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darkened ways
Made for our searching: yes, in spite of all,
Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
From our dark spirits. Such the sun, the moon,
Trees old and young, sprouting a shady boon
For simple sheep; and such are daffodils
With the green world they live in; and clear rills
That for themselves a cooling covert make
'Gainst the hot season; the mid-forest brake,
Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms:
And such too is the grandeur of the dooms
We have imagined for the mighty dead;
All lovely tales that we have heard or read:
An endless fountain of immortal drink,
Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink.

Nor do we merely feel these essences
For one short hour; no, even as the trees
That whisper round a temple become soon
Dear as the temple's self, so does the moon,
The passion poesy, glories infinite,
Haunt us till they become a cheering light
Unto our souls, and bound to us so fast,
That, whether there be shine, or gloom o'ercast,
They always must be with us, or we die.

JOHN KEATS

God, lover of souls

IN THE VALLEY OF THE ELWY

I REMEMBER a house where all were good
To me, God knows, deserving no such thing:
Comforting smell breathed at very entering,
Fetched fresh, as I suppose, off some sweet wood.
That cordial air made those kind people a hood
All over, as a bevy of eggs the mothering wing
Will, or mild nights the new morsels of spring:
Why, it seemed of course; seemed of right it should.

Lovely the woods, waters, meadows, combes, vales,
All the air things wear that build this world of Wales;
Only the inmate does not correspond: -
God, lover of souls, swaying considerate scales,
Complete thy creature dear O where it fails,
Being mighty a master, being a father and fond.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

THE MARSHES OF GLYNN

GLOOMS of the live-oaks, beautiful-braided and woven
With intricate shades of the vines that myriad-cloven
Clamber the forks of the multiform boughs,—
Emerald twilights,—
Virginal shy lights,
Wrought of the leaves to allure to the whisper of vows,
When lovers pace timidly down through the green colon-
nades
Of the dim sweet woods, of the dear dark woods,

God, lover of souls

Of the heavenly woods and glades,
That run to the radiant marginal sand-beach within
The wide sea-marshes of Glynn;—

Beautiful glooms, soft dusks in the noon-day fire,—
Wildwood privacies, closets of lone desire,
Chamber from chamber parted with wavering arras of
leaves,—

Cells for the passionate pleasure of prayer to the soul that
grieves,

Pure with a sense of the passing of saints through the
wood,

Cool for the dutiful weighing of ill with good;—

O braided dusks of the oak and woven shades of the vine,
While the riotous noon-day sun of the June-day long did
shine

Ye held me fast in your heart and I held you fast in mine;
But now when the noon is no more, and riot is rest,
And the sun is a-wait at the ponderous gate of the West,
And the slant yellow beam down the wood-aisle doth
seem

Like a lane into heaven that leads from a dream,—

Ay, now, when my soul all day hath drunken the soul of
the oak,

And my heart is at ease from men, and the wearisome
sound of the stroke

Of the scythe of time and the trowel of trade is low,
And belief overmasters doubt, and I know that I know,
And my spirit is grown to a lordly great compass within,
That the length and the breadth and the sweep of the
marshes of Glynn

Will work me no fear like the fear they have wrought me
of yore

When length was fatigue, and when breadth was but bit-
terness sore,

God, lover of souls

And when terror and shrinking and dreary unnamable
pain
Drew over me out of the merciless miles of the plain,—

Oh, now, unafraid, I am laid to face
The vast sweet visage of space.
To the edge of the wood I am drawn, I am drawn,
Where the gray beach glimmering runs, as a belt of the
dawn,

For a mete and a mark
To the forest-dark:—

So:

Affable live-oak, leaning low,—
Thus—with your favor—soft, with a reverent hand
(Not lightly touching your person, Lord of the land!),
Bending your beauty aside, with a step I stand
On the firm-packed sand,

Free

By a world of marsh that borders a world of sea.

Sinuous southward and sinuous northward the shimmering
band

Of the sand-beach fastens the fringe of the marsh to the
folds of the land.

Inward and outward to northward and southward the
beach-lines linger and curl

As a silver-wrought garment that clings to and follows the
firm sweet limbs of a girl.

Vanishing, swerving, evermore curving again into sight,
Softly the sand-beach wavers away to a dim gray looping
of light.

And what if behind me to westward the wall of the woods
stands high?

The world lies east: how ample, the marsh and the sea
and the sky!

A league and a league of marsh-grass, waist-high, broad

God, lover of souls

in the blade,
Green, and all of a height, and unblecked with a light or
a shado,
Stretch leisurcly off, in a pleasant plain,
To the terminal blue of the main.

Oh, what is abroad in the marsh and the terminal sea?
Somehow my soul seems suddenly free
From the weighing of fate and the sad discussion of sin.
By the length and the breadth and the sweep of the
marshes of Glynn.

Ye marshes, how candid and simple and nothing-with-
holding and free
Ye publish yourselves to the sky and offer yourselves to
the sea!
Tolerant plains, that suffer the sea and the rains and the
sun,
Ye spread and span like the catholic man who hath
mightily won
God out of knowledge and good out of infinite pain
And sight out of blindness and purity out of a stain.

As the marsh-hen secretly builds on the watery sod,
Behold I will build me a nest on the greatness of God:
I will fly in the greatness of God as the marsh-hen flies
In the freedom that fills all the space 'twixt the marsh and
the skies:
By so many roots as the marsh-grass sends in the sod
I will heartily lay me a-hold on the greatness of God:
Oh, like to the greatness of God is the greatness within
The range of the marshes, the liberal marshes of Glynn.

And the sea lends large, as the marsh: lo, out of his plenty
the sea

God, lover of souls

Pours fast: full soon the time of the flood-tide must be:
Look how the grace of the sea doth go
About and about through the intricate channels that flow
Here and there,

Everywhere,

Till his waters have flooded the uttermost creeks and the
low-lying lanes,

And the marsh is meshed with a million veins,
That like as with rosy and silvery essences flow

In the rose-and-silver evening glow.

Farewell, my lord Sun!

The creeks overflow: a thousand rivulets run
'Twixt the roots of the sod; the blades of the marsh-grass
stir;

Passeth a hurrying sound of wings that westward whir;
Passeth, and all is still; and the currents cease to run;
And the sea and the marsh are one.

How still the plains of the waters be!

The tide is in his ecstacy.

The tide is at his highest height:

And it is night.

And now from the Vast of the Lord will the waters of
sleep

Roll in on the souls of men,

But who will reveal to our waking ken

The forms that swim and the shapes that creep

Under the waters of sleep?

And I would I could know what swimmeth below when
the tide comes in

On the length and the breadth of the marvelous marshes
of Glynn.

SIDNEY LANIER

N ANOTHER'S SORROW

CAN I see another's woe,
And not be in sorrow too?
Can I see another's grief,
And not seek for kind relief?

Can I see a falling tear,
And not feel my sorrow's share?
Can a father see his child
Weep, nor be with sorrow fill'd?

Can a mother sit and hear
An infant groan an infant fear?
No, no! never can it be!
Never, never can it be!

And can he who smiles on all
Hear the wren with sorrows small,
Hear the small bird's grief and care,
Hear the woes that infants bear,

And not sit beside the nest,
Pouring pity in their breast;
And not sit the cradle near,
Weeping tear on infant's tear;

And not sit both night and day,
Wiping all our tears away?
O, no! never can it be!
Never, never can it be!

He doth give his joy to all;
He becomes an infant small;

God, lover of souls

He becomes a man of woe;
He doth feel the sorrow too.

Think not thou canst sigh a sigh
And thy maker is not by;
Think not thou canst weep a tear
And thy maker is not near.

O! he gives to us his joy
That our grief he may destroy;
Till our grief is fled and gone
He doth sit by us and moan.

WILLIAM BLAKE

PIED BEAUTY

GLORY be to God for dappled things—
For skies of couple-color as a brinded cow;
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
Landscape plotted and pieced—fold, fallow, and
plough;
And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.

All things counter, original, spare, strange;
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:
Praise him.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

God, lover of souls

BRAHMA

If the red slayer think he slays,
Or if the slain think he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
I keep, and pass, and turn again.

Far or forgot to me is near;
Shadow and sunlight are the same;
The vanished gods to me appear;
And one to me are shame and fame.

They reckon ill who leave me out;
When me they fly, I am the wings;
I am the doubter and the doubt,
And I the hymn the Brahmin sings.

The strong gods pine for my abode,
And pine in vain the sacred Seven;
But thou, meek lover of the good!
Find me, and turn thy back on heaven.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

THE RHODORA

Lines on Being Asked, Whence Is the Flower?

IN May, when sea-winds pierced our solitudes,
I found the fresh rhodora in the woods,
Spreading its leafless blooms in a damp nook,
To please the desert and the sluggish brook:
The purple petals fallen in the pool

God, lover of souls

Made the black waters with their beauty gay,—
Here might the red-bird come his plumes to cool,
And court the flower that cheapens his array.
Rhodora! if the sages ask thee why
This charm is wasted on the marsh and sky,
Tell them, dear, that if eyes were made for seeing,
Then beauty is its own excuse for being.
Why thou wert there, O rival of the rose!
I never thought to ask; I never knew,
But in my simple ignorance suppose
The self-same Power that brought me there brought you.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

GOD'S GRANDEUR

THE world is charged with the grandeur of God.
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;
It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil
Crushed. Why do men then now not rock his rod?
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;
And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;
And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent;
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;
And though the last lights off the black West went
Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs—
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright
wings.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

THE DARK ANGEL

DARK Angel, with thine aching lust
To rid the world of penitence:
Malicious Angel, who still dost
My soul such subtle violence!

Because of thee, no thought, no thing
Abides for me undesecrated:
Dark Angel, ever on the wing,
Who never reachest me too late!

When music sounds, then changest thou
Its silvery to a sultry fire:
Nor will thine envious heart allow
Delight untortured by desire.

Through thee, the gracious Muses turn
To Furies, O mine Enemy!
And all the things of beauty burn
With flames of evil ecstasy.

Because of thee, the land of dreams
Becomes a gathering-place of fears:
Until tormented slumber seems
One vehemence of useless tears.

When sunlight glows upon the flowers,
Or ripples down the dancing sea:
Thou, with thy troop of passionate powers,
Beleaguerest, bewilderest me.

Within the breath of autumn woods,
Within the winter silences:

God, lover of souls

Thy venomous spirit stirs and broods,
O master of impieties!

The arclour of red flame is thine,
And thine the steely soul of ice:
Thou poisonest the fair design
Of nature, with unfair device.

Apples of ashes, golden bright;
Waters of bitterness, how sweet!
O banquet of a soul delight,
Prepared by thee, dark Paraclete.

Thou art the whisper in the gloom,
The hinting tone, the haunting laugh:
Thou art the adorning of my tomb,
The minstrel of mine epitaph.

I fight thee, in the Holy Name!
Yet, what thou dost, is what God saith:
Tempter! should I escape thy flame,
Thou wilt have helped my soul from Death:

The second Death, that never dies,
That cannot die, when time is dead:
Live Death, wherein the lost soul cries,
Eternally uncomforted.

Dark Angel, with thine aching lust!
Of two defeats, of two despairs:
Less dread, a change to drifting dust,
Than thine eternity of cares.

Do what thou wilt, thou shalt not so,
Dark Angell! triumph over me:

God, lover of souls

*Lonely, unto the Lone I go;
Divine, to the Divinity.*

LIONEL JOINSON

THE DIVINE IMAGE

To Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
All pray in their distress;
And to these virtues of delight
Return their thankfulness.

For Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
Is God, our Father dear,
And Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
Is man, *His child and care.*

For Mercy has a human heart,
Pity a human face,
And Love, the human form divine,
And Peace, the human dress.

Then every man, of every clime,
That prays in his distress,
Prays to the human form divine,
Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace.

And all must love the human form,
In heathen, Turk, or Jew;
Where Mercy, Love, and Pity dwell
There God is dwelling too.

WILLIAM BLAKE

God, lover of souls

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O master of impieties!

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In heathen, Turk, or Jew;
Where Mercy, Love, and Pity dwell
There God is dwelling too.

WILLIAM BLAKE

God, lover of souls

THE LAMB

LITTLE Lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?
Gave thee life, and bid thee feed,
By the stream and o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing, woolly, bright;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice?
Little Lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?

Little Lamb, I'll tell thee,
Little Lamb, I'll tell thee:
He is called by thy name,
For He calls Himself a Lamb.
He is meek, and He is mild;
He became a little child.
I a child, and thou a lamb,
We are called by His name.
Little Lamb, God bless thee!
Little Lamb, God bless thee!

WILLIAM BLAKE

JEAN RICHEPIN'S SONG

A POOR lad once and a lad so trim,
Fol de rol de raly Ol
Fol de roll

God, lover of souls

A poor lad once and a lad so trim
Gave his love to her that loved not him.

And, says she, 'Fetch me to-night you rogue,'
Fol de rol de raly Ol
Fol de roll

And, says she, 'Fetch me to-night, you rogue,
Your mother's heart to feed my dog!'

To his mother's house went that young man
Fol de rol de raly Ol
Fol de roll

To his mother's house went that young man
Killed her, and took the heart, and ran.

And as he was running, look you, he fell
Fol de rol de raly Ol
Fol de roll

And as he was running, look you, he fell
And the heart rolled on the ground as well.

And the lad, as the heart was a-rolling, heard
(Fol de rol de raly Ol
Fol de roll)

And the lad, as the heart was a-rolling, heard
That the heart was speaking, and this was the word—

The heart was a-weeping, and crying so small
(Fol de rol de raly Ol
Fol de roll)

The heart was a-weeping, and crying so small
'Are you hurt my child, are you hurt at all?'

HERBERT TRENCH

In that land

THE MEDITERRANEAN

Quem das finem, rex magne, dolorum?

WHERE we went in the boat was a long bay
A slingshot wide, walled in by towering stone—
Peaked margin of antiquity's delay,
And we went there out of time's monotone:

Where we went in the black hull no light moved
But a gull white-winged along the feckless wave,
The breeze, unseen but fierce as a body loved,
That boat drove onward like a willing slave:

Where we went in the small ship the seaweed
Parted and gave to us the murmuring shore
And we made feast and in our secret need
Devoured the very plates Aeneas bore:

Where derelict you see through the low twilight
The green coast that you, thunder-tossed, would win,
Drop sail, and hastening to drink all night
Eat dish and bowl—to take that sweet land in!

Where we feasted and caroused on the sandless
Pebbles, affecting our day of piracy,
What prophecy of eaten plates could landless
Wanderers fulfil by the ancient sea?

We for that time might taste the famous age
Eternal here yet hidden from our eyes
When lust of power undid its stuffless rage;
They, in a wineskin, bore earth's paradise.

were we born

Let us lie down once more by the breathing side
Of Ocean, where our live forefathers sleep
As if the Known Sea still were a month wide—
Atlantis howls but is no longer steep!

What country shall we conquer, what fair land
Unman our conquest and locate our blood?
We've cracked the hemispheres with careless hand!
Now, from the Gates of Hercules we flood

Westward, westward till the barbarous brine
Whelms us to the tired world where tasseling corn,
Fat beans, grapes sweeter than muscadine
Rot on the vine: in that land were we born. .

ALLEN TATE

SPENSER'S IRELAND

Has not altered;—
 the kindest place I've never been,
 the greenest place I've never seen.
Every name is a tune.
Denunciations do not affect
 the culprit; nor blows, but it
is torture to him to not be spoken to.
They're natural,—
 the coat, like Venus'
mantle lined with stars,
buttoned close at the neck,—the
 sleeves new from disuse.

In that land

If in Ireland
they play the harp backward at need,
and gather at midday the seed
of the fern, cluding
their "giants all covered with iron," might
there be tern seed for unlearn-
ing obduracy and for reinstating
the enchantment?
Hindered characters
seldom have mothers—
in Irish stories—
but they all have grandmothers.

It was Irish;
a match not a marriage was made
when my great great grandmother'd said
with native genius for
disunion, "although your suitor be
perfection, one objection
is enough; he is not
Irish." Outwitting
the fairies, befriending the furies,
whoever again
and again says, "I'll never
give in," never sees

that you're not free
until you've been made captive by
supreme belief,—credulity
you say? When large dainty
fingers tremblingly divide the wings
of the fly for mid-July
with a needle and wrap it with peacock-tail,
or tie wool and

were we born

buzzard's wing, their pride,
like the enchanter's
is in care, not madness. Con-
curring hands divide

flax for damask
that when bleached by Irish weather
has the silvered chamois-leather
water-tightness of a
skin. Twisted tores and gold new-moon-shaped
lunulae aren't jewelry
like the purple-coral fuchsia-tree's. If Eire—
"the guillemot
so neat" and the hen
of the heath and "the
linnet spinet-sweet"—bespeak
relentlessness, then

they are to me
like enchanted Earl Gerald who
changed himself into a stag, to
a great green-eyed cat of
the mountain. Discommodity makes
them invisible; they've dis-
appeared. The Irish say "Your trouble is their
trouble and your
joy their joy." I wish
I could believe it;
I am troubled, I'm dissat-
isfied, I'm Irish.

MARIANNE MOORE

In that land

If in Ireland
they play the harp backward at need,
and gather at midday the seed
of the fern, eluding
their "giants all covered with iron," might
there be fern seed for unlearn-
ing obduracy and for reinstating
the enchantment?

Hindered characters
seldom have mothers—
in Irish stories—
but they all have grandmothers.

It was Irish;
a match not a marriage was made
when my great great grandmother'd said
with native genius for
disunion, "although your suitor be
perfection, one objection
is enough; he is not
Irish." Outwitting
the fairies, befriending the furies,
whoever again
and again says, "I'll never
give in," never sees

that you're not free
until you've been made captive by
supreme belief,—credulity
you say? When large dainty
fingers tremblingly divide the wings
of the fly for mid-July
with a needle and wrap it with peacock-tail,
or tie wool and

were we born

buzzard's wing, their pride,
like the enchanter's
is in care, not madness. Con-
curring hands divide

flax for damask
that when bleached by Irish weather
has the silvered chamois-leather
water-tightness of a
skin. Twisted torcs and gold new-moon-shaped
lunulae aren't jewelry
like the purple-coral fuchsia-tree's. If Eire—
"the guillemot
so neat" and the hen
of the heath and "the
linnet spinet-sweet"—bespeak
relentlessness, then

they are to me
like enchanted Earl Gerald who
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I could believe it;
I am troubled, I'm dissat-
isfied, I'm Irish.

MARIANNE MOORE

THE FAIRIES

Up the airy mountain,
Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a-hunting
For fear of little men;
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together;
Green jacket, red cap,
And white owl's feather!

Down along the rocky shore
Some make their home,
They live on crispy pancakes
Of yellow tide-foam;
Some in the reeds
Of the black mountain lake,
With frogs for their watch-dogs.
All night awake.

High on the hill-top
The old King sits;
He is now so old and gray
He's nigh lost his wits.
With a bridge of white mist
Columbkille he crosses,
On his stately journeys
From Slieveleague to Rosses;
Or going up with music
On cold starry nights
To sup with the Queen
Of the gay Northern Lights.

Up the airy mountain

They stole little Bridget
For seven years long;
When she came down again
Her friends were all gone.
They took her lightly back,
Between the night and morrow,
They thought that she was fast asleep,
But she was dead with sorrow.
They have kept her ever since
Deep within the lake,
On a bed of flag-leaves,
Watching till she wake.

By the craggy hill-side,
Through the mosses bare,
They have planted thorn-trees
For pleasure here and there.
If any man so daring
As dig them up in spite,
He shall find their sharpest thorns
In his bed at night.

Up the airy mountain,
Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a-hunting
For fear of little men;
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together;
Green jacket, red cap,
And white owl's feather!

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM

Up the airy mountain

THE FAIRIES' FAREWELL

FAREWELL, rewards and fairies,
Good housewives now may say,
For now foul sluts in dairies
Do fare as well as they.
And though they sweep their hearths no less
Than maids were wont to do,
Yet who of late, for cleanliness,
Finds sixpence in her shoe?

Lament, lament, old Abbeys,
The fairies' lost command;
They did not change priests' babies,
But some have changed your land!
And all your children sprung from thence
Are now grown Puritans,
Who live as changelings ever since,
For love of your domains.

At morning and at evening both
You merry wore and glad;
So little care of sleep or sloth
These pretty ladies had;
When Tom came home from labour,
Or Ciss to milking rose,
Then merrily went their tabor
And nimbly went their toes.

Witness those rings and roundelays
Of theirs, which yet remain,
Were footed in Queen Mary's days
On many a grassy plain;
But since of late, Elizabeth
And, later, James came in,

Up the airy mountain

They never danced on any heath
As when the time hath been.

By which we note the lairies
Were of the old profession;
Their songs were *Ave-Maries*,
Their dances were procession.
But now, alas! they all are dead,
Or gone beyond the seas;
Or farther for religion fled;
Or else they take their ease.

A tell-tale in their company
They never could endure;
And whoso kept not secretly
Their mirth, was punished sure;
It was a most just Christian deed
To pinch such black and blue:
Oh, how the Commonwealth doth need
Such justices as you!

RICHARD CORBETT

TOM O' BEDLAM'S SONG

FROM the hag and hungry goblin
That into rags would rend ye,
And the spirit that stands
By the naked man
In the book of moons defend ye,
That of your five sound senses
You never be forsaken,

Up the airy mountain

Nor wander from
Yourselves with Tom
Abroad to beg your bacon.

*While I do sing, "Any food, any feeding,
Feeding, drink or clothing^p
Come, dame or maid,
Be not afraid,
Poor Tom will injure nothing."*

Of thirty bare years have I
Twice twenty been enraged,
And of forty been
Three times fifteen
In duranco sadly cagéd
On the lordly lofts of Bedlam
With stubble soft and dainty,
Brave bracelets strong,
Sweet whips, ding-dong,
With wholesome hunger plenty.

And now I do sing, &c.

With a thought I took for Maudlin,
And a cruse of cockle pottage,
With a thing thus tall,
Sky bless you all
I befell into this dotage.
I slept not since the conquest,
Till then I never wakéd,
Till the roguish boy
Of love where I lay
Me found and stript me naked.

And now I do sing, &c.

Up the airy mountain

When I shott have shorn my sow's face
And swigged my horny baird
In an oaken inn
I pound my skin
As a suit of gilt apparel.
The moon's my constant mistress
And the lowly owl my morrow;
The flaming drake
And the night-crow make
Me music to my sorrow.

While I do sing, &c.

The palsy plagues my pulses
When I prig your pigs or pullen,
Your culvors take,
Or matchless make
Your chanticleer or sullen—
When I want provant with Humphrey
I sup, and when benighted,
I repose in Paul's
With waking souls
Yet never am affrighted.

But I do sing, &c.

I know more than Apollo,
For oft, when he lies sleeping,
I see the stars
At bloody wars
In the wounded welkin weeping,
The moon embrace her shepherd
And the queen of love her warrior,
While the first doth horn

Up the airy mountain

The star of the morn
And the next the heavenly farrier.

While I do sing, &c.

The gipsy Snap, and Pedro,
Are none of Tom's comrades;
The punk I scorn
And the cutpurse sworn
And the roaring-boys' bravadoes;
The meek, the white, the gentle,
Me handle, touch, and spare not,
But those that cross
Tom Rhinoceros
Do what the panther dare not.

Although I do sing, &c.

With a heart of furious fancies
Whereof I am commander,
With a burning spear
And a horse of air
To the wilderness I wander;
By a knight of ghosts and shadows
I summoned am to tourney
Ten leagues beyond
The wide world's end
—Methinks it is no journey.

*Yet will I sing, "Any food, any feeding.
Feeding, drink or clothing?
Come, dame or maid,
Be not afraid,
Poor Tom will injure nothing."*

ANON

THE CUTTY WREN

O, WHERE are you going, says Milder to Malder,
O, I cannot tell, says Festel to Fose,
We're going to the woods, says John the Red Nose,
We're going to the woods, says John the Red Nose.

O, what will you do there, says Milder to Malder,
O, I cannot tell, says Festel to Fose,
We'll shoot the Cutty Wren, says John the Red Nose,
We'll shoot the Cutty Wren, says John the Red Nose.

O, how will you shoot her, says Milder to Malder,
O, I cannot tell, says Festel to Fose,
With arrows and bows, says John the Red Nose,
With arrows and bows, says John the Red Nose.

O, that will not do, says Milder to Malder,
O, what will do then, says Festel to Fose,
Big guns and cannons, says John the Red Nose,
Big guns and cannons, says John the Red Nose.

O, how will you bring her home, says Milder to Malder,
O, I cannot tell, says Festel to Fose,
On four strong men's shoulders, says John the Red Nose,
On four strong men's shoulders, says John the Red Nose.

O, that will not do, says Milder to Malder,
O, what will do then, says Festel to Fose,
Big carts and waggons, says John the Red Nose,
Big carts and waggons, says John the Red Nose.

O, what will you cut her up with, says Milder to Malder,
O, I cannot tell, says Festel to Fose,

War

Weaving spiders come not here:
Hence, you long-legg'd spinners, hence!
Beetles black, approach not near;
Worm nor snail, do no offence.

Philomel, with melody,
Sing in our sweet lullaby
Lulla, lulla, lullaby, lulla, lulla, lullaby
Never harm,
Nor spell, nor charm,
Come our lovely lady nigh;
So, good night, with lullaby.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

THE SHOW

*We have fallen in the dreams the ever-living
Breathe on the tarnished mirror of the world,
And then smooth out with ivory hands and sigh*

W. B. YEATS

My soul looked down from a vague height with Death,
As unremembering how I rose or why,
And saw a sad land, weak with sweats of dearth,
Gray, cratered like the moon with hollow woe,
And pitted with great pocks and scabs of plagues.

Across its beard, that horror of harsh wire,
There moved thin caterpillars, slowly uncoiled.

War

It seemed they pushed themselves to be as plugs
Of ditches, where they withered and shrivelled, killed.

By them had slimy paths been trailed and scraped
Round myriad warts that might be little hills.

From gloom's last dregs these long-strung creatures crept,
And vanished out of dawn down hidden holes.

(And smell came up from those foul openings
As out of mouths, or deep wounds deepening.)

On dithering feet upgathered, more and more,
Brown strings, towards strings of gray, with bristling
spines,
All migrants from green fields, intent on mire.

Those that wore gray, of more abundant spawns,
Ramped on the rest and ate them and were eaten.

I saw their bitten backs curve, loop, and straighten,
I watched those agonies curl, lift, and flatten.

Whereat, in terror what that sight might mean,
I reeled and shivered earthward like a feather.

And Death fell with me, like a deepening moan.
And He, picking a manner of worm, which half had hid
Its bruises in the earth, but crawled no further,
Showed me its feet, the feet of many men,
And the fresh-severed head of it, my head.

WILFRED OWEN

War

A REFUSAL TO MOURN THE
DEATH, BY FIRE, OF A
CHILD IN LONDON

NEVER until the mankind making
Bird beast and flower
Fathering and all humbling darkness
Tolls with silence the last light breaking
And the still hour
Is come of the sea tumbling in harness

And I must enter again the round
Zion of the water bead
And the synagogue of the ear of corn
Shall I let pray the shadow of a sound
Or sow my salt seed
In the least valley of sackcloth to mourn

The majesty and burning of the child's death.
I shall not murder
The mankind of her going with a grave truth
Nor blasphemous down the stations of the breath
With any further
Elegy of innocence and youth.

Deep with the first dead lies London's daughter,
Robed in the long friends,
The grains beyond age, the dark veins of her mother
Secret by the unmourning water
Of the riding Thames.
After the first death, there is no other.

DYLAN THOMAS

SESTINA: ALTAFORTE

Loquitur *Li Bertrams de Born.*

Dante Alighieri put this man in hell for that he was a stunter up of strife

Eccovil

Judge ye!

Have I dug him up again?

The scene is at his castle, Altaforte. 'Papiols' is his jongleur.

'The Leopard,' the *devue* of Richard Cœur de Lion.

DAMN it all! all this our South stinks peace.

You whoreson dog, Papiols, come! Let's to music!

I have no life save when the swords clash.

But ah! when I see the standards gold, vair, purple,
opposing

And the broad fields beneath them turn crimson,

Then howl I my heart nigh mad with rejoicing.

In hot summer have I great rejoicing

When the tempests kill the earth's foul peace,

And the lightnings from black heav'n flash crimson,

And the fierce thunders roar me their music

And the winds shriek through the clouds mad, opposing,

And through all the riven skies God's swords clash.

Hell grant soon we hear again the swords clash!

And the shrill neighs of destriers in battle rejoicing,

Spiked breast to spiked breast opposing!

Better one hour's stour than a year's peace!

With fat boards, bawds, wine and frail music!

Bah! there's no wine like the blood's crimson!

And I love to see the sun rise blood-crimson.

And I watch his spears through the dark clash

And it fills all my heart with rejoicing

And pries wide my mouth with fast music

War

When I see him so scorn and defy peace,
His lone might 'gainst all darkness opposing.

The man who fears war and squats opposing
My words for stour, hath no blood of crimson,
But is fit only to rot in womanish peace
Far from where worth's won and the swords clash
For the death of such sluts I go rejoicing;
Yea, I fill all the air with my music.

Papiols, Papiols, to the music!
There's no sound like to swords swords opposing,
No cry like the battle's rejoicing
When our elbows and swords drip the crimson
And our charges 'gainst 'The Leopard's' rush clash.
May God damn for ever all who cry 'Peace!'

And let the music of the swords make them crimson!
Hell grant soon we hear again the swords clash!
Hell blot black for alway the thought 'Peace!'

EZRA POUND

THE MARCH INTO VIRGINIA

(July 1861)

Dim all the lets and bars appear
To every just or larger end,
Whence should come the trust and cheer?
Youth must its ignorant impulse lend—
Age finds place in the rear.
All wars are boyish, and are fought by boys,

War

The champions and enthusiasts of the state:
Turbid ardours and vain joys
Not hastily abate—
Stimulants to the power mature,
Preparatives of fate.

Who here forecasteth the event?
What heart but spurns at precedent
And warnings of the wise,
Contemned foreclosures of surprise?
The banners play, the bugles call,
The air is blue and prodigal.

No berrying party, pleasure-wooed,
No picnic party in the May,
Ever went less loth than they
Into that leafy neighborhood.

In Bacchic glee they file toward Fate,
Moloch's uninitiate;

Expectancy, and glad surmise
Of battle's unknown mysteries.

All they feel is this: 'tis glory,
A rapture sharp, though transitory,
Yet lasting in belauded story.

So they gaily go to fight,
Chatting left and laughing right.

But some who this blithe mood present,

As on in lightsome files they fare,
Shall die experienced ere three days are spent—

Perish, enlightened by the volleyed glare;
Or shame survive, and like to adamant,
The throe of Second Manassas share.

War

GREATER LOVE

Red lips are not so red
As the stained stones kissed by the English dead.
Kindness of wood and woeer
Seems shame to their love pure.
O Love, your eyes lose lure
When I behold eyes blinded in my stead!

Your slender attitude
Trembles not exquisite like limbs knife-skewed,
Rolling and rolling there
Where God seems not to care;
Till the fierce love they bear
Cramps them in death's extreme decrepitude.

Your voice sings not so soft,—
Though even as wind murmuring through rafters
loft,—
Your dear voice is not clear,
Gentle, and evening clear,
As theirs whom none now hear
Now earth has stopped their piteous mouths that
coughed.

Heart, you were never hot,
Nor large, nor full like hearts made great with shot;
And though your hand be pale,
Paler are all which trail
Your cross through flame and hail:
Weep, you may weep, for you may touch them not.

WILFRED OWEN

AN IRISH AIRMAN FORESEES
HIS DEATH

I KNOW that I shall meet my fate
Somewhere among the clouds above;
Those that I fight I do not hate,
Those that I guard I do not love;
My country is Kiltartan Cross,
My countrymen Kiltartan's poor,
No likely end could bring them loss
Or leave them happier than before.
Nor law, nor duty bade me fight,
Nor public men, nor cheering crowds,
A lonely impulse of delight
Drove to this tumult in the clouds;
I balanced all, brought all to mind,
The years to come seemed waste of breath,
A waste of breath the years behind
In balance with this life, this death.

W. B. YEATS

THE BURIAL OF SIR JOHN
MOORE AFTER CORUNNA

Nor a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
As his corse to the rampart we hurried;
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
O'er the grave where our hero we buried.

We buried him darkly at dead of night,
The sods with our bayonets turning,

War

By the struggling moonbeam's misty light
And the lanthorn dimly burning.

No useless coffin enclosed his breast,
Not in sheet or in shroud we wound him;
But he lay like a warrior taking his rest
With his martial cloak around him.

Few and short were the prayers we said,
And we spoke not a word of sorrow;
But we steadfastly gazed on the face that was dead,
And we bitterly thought of the morrow.

We thought, as we hollow'd his narrow bed
And smooth'd down his lonely pillow,
That the foe and the stranger would tread o'er his head,
And we far away on the billow!

Lightly they'll talk of the spirit that's gone,
And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him—
But little he'll reck, if they let him sleep on
In the grave where a Briton has laid him.

But half of our heavy task was done
When the clock struck the hour for retiring;
And we heard the distant and random gun
That the foe was sullenly firing.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
From the field of his fame fresh and gory;
We carved not a line, and we raised not a stone,
But we left him alone with his glory.

CHARLES WOLFE

THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB

THE Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew still!

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride;
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail:
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

THE DEAD

THESE hearts were woven of human joys and cares,
Washed marvellously with sorrow, swift to mirth.
The years had given them kindness. Dawn was theirs,
And sunset, and the colours of the earth.
These had seen movement, and heard music; known
Slumber and waking; loved; gone proudly friended;
Felt the quick stir of wonder; sat alone;
Touched flowers and furs and cheeks. All this is ended.
There are waters blown by changing winds to laughter
And lit by the rich skies, all day. And after,
Frost, with a gesture, stays the waves that dance
And wandering loveliness. He leaves a white
Unbroken glory, a gathered radiance,
A width, a shining peace, under the night.

RUPERT BROOKE

THE GROUNDHOG

IN June, amid the golden fields,
I saw a groundhog lying dead.
Dead lay he; my senses shook,
And mind outshot our naked frailty.
There lowly in the vigorous summer
His form began its senseless change,
And made my senses waver dim
Seeing nature ferocious in him.
Inspecting close his maggots' might
And seething cauldron of his being,
Half with loathing, half with a strange love,
I poked him with an angry stick.
The fever arose, became a flame
And Vigour circumscribed the skies,

Mortality

Immense energy in the sun,
And through my frame a sunless trembling.
My stick had done nor good nor harm.
Then stood I silent in the day
Watching the object, as before;
And kept my reverence for knowledge
Trying for control, to be still,
To quell the passion of the blood;
Until I had bent down on my knees
Praying for joy in the sight of decay.
And so I left; and I returned
In Autumn strict of eye, to see
The sap gone out of the groundhog,
But the bony sodden hulk remained.
But the year had lost its meaning,
And in intellectual chains
I lost both love and loathing,
Mured up in the wall of wisdom.
Another summer took the fields again
Massive and burning, full of life,
But when I chanced upon the spot
There was only a little hair left,
And bones bleaching in the sunlight
Beautiful as architecture;
I watched them like a geometer,
And cut a walking stick from a birch.
It has been three years, now.
There is no sign of the groundhog.
I stood there in the whirling summer,
My hand capped a withered heart,
And thought of China and of Greece,
Of Alexander in his tent;
Of Montaigne in his tower,
Of Saint Theresa in her wild lament.

RICHARD EBE.

Mortality

ON A DEAD CHILD

PERFECT little body, without fault or stain on thee,
With promise of strength and manhood full and fair!
Though cold and stark and bare,
The bloom and the charm of life doth awhile remain on
thee.

Thy mother's treasure wert thou;—alas! no longer
To visit her heart with wondrous joy; to be
Thy father's pride;—ah, he
Must gather his faith together, and his strength make
stronger.

To me, as I move thee now in the last duty,
Dost thou with a turn or gesture anon respond;
Startling my fancy fond
With a chance attitude of the head, a freak of beauty.

Thy hand clasps, as 'twas wont, my finger, and holds it:
But the grasp is the clasp of Death, heart-breaking and
stiff;
Yet feels to my hand as if
'Twas still thy will, thy pleasure and trust that enfolds it.

So I lay thee there, thy sunken eyelids closing—
Go lie thou there in thy coffin, thy last little bed!—
Propping thy wise, sad head,
Thy firm, pale hands across thy chest disposing.

So quiet! doth the change content thee?—Death, whither
hath he taken thee?

To a world, do I think, that rights the disaster of this?
138

The vision of which I miss,
Who weep for the body, and wish but to warm thee and
awaken thee?

Ah! little at best can all our hopes avail us
To lift this sorrow, or cheer us, when in the dark,
Unwilling, alone we embark,
And the things we have seen and have known and have
heard of, fail us.

ROBERT BRIDGES

LITTLE BOY BLUE

THE little toy dog is covered with dust,
But sturdy and stanch it stands;
And the little toy soldier is red with rust,
And his musket molds in his hands.
Time was when the little toy dog was new
And the soldier was passing fair,
And that was the time when our Little Boy Blue
Kissed them and put them there.

"Now, don't you go till I come," he said,
"And don't you make any noise!"
So toddling off to his trundle-bed
He dreamed of the pretty toys.
And as he was dreaming, an angel song
Awakened our Little Boy Blue—
Oh, the years are many, the years are long,
But the little toy friends are true.

Ay, faithful to Little Boy Blue they stand,
Each in the same old place,

Mortality

Awaiting the touch of a little hand,
And the smile of a little face.
And they wonder, as waiting these long years through,
In the dust of that little chair,
What has become of our Little Boy Blue
Since he kissed them and put them there.

EUGENE FIELD

TO AN ATHLETE DYING YOUNG

THE time you won your town the race
We chaired you through the market-place;
Man and boy stood cheering by,
And home we brought you shoulder-high.

To-day, the road all runners come,
Shoulder-high we bring you home,
And set you at your threshold down,
Townsmen of a stiller town.

Smart lad, to slip betimes away
From fields where glory does not stay,
And early though the laurel grows
It withers quicker than the rose.

Eyes the shady night has shut
Cannot see the record cut,
And silence sounds no worse than cheers
After earth has stopped the ears.

Now you will not swell the rout
Of lads that wore their honors out,

Mortality

Runners whom renown outran
And the name died before the man.

So set, before its echoes fade,
The fleet foot on the sill of shade,
And hold to the low lintel up
The still-defended challenge-cup.

And round that early-laurelled head
Will flock to gaze the strengthless dead,
And find unwithered on its curls
The garland briefer than a girl's.

A. E. HOUSMAN

OUR REVELS NOW ARE ENDED

Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits and
Are melted into air, into thin air:
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
(from *The Tempest*)

Death

THE INDIAN BURYING GROUND

IN spite of all the learned have said,
I still my old opinion keep:
The *posture* that *we* give the dead
Points out the soul's eternal sleep.

Not so the ancients of these lands:
The Indian, when from life released,
Again is seated with his friends,
And shares again the joyous feast.

His imaged birds and painted bowl,
And venison for a journey dressed,
Bespeak the nature of the soul—
ACTIVITY that knows no rest.

His bow for action ready bent,
And arrows with a head of stone,
Can only mean that life is spent,
And not the old ideas gone.

Thou, stranger, that shalt come this way,
No fraud upon the dead commit:
Observe the swelling turf, and say,
"They do not *lie*, but here they *sit*."

Here still a lofty rock remains,
On which the curious eye may trace
(Now wasted, half, by wearing rains)
The fancies of a ruder race.

Here still an aged elm aspires,
Beneath whose far-projecting shade

(And which the shepherd still admires)
The children of the forest played.

There oft a restless Indian queen,
Pale *Shebah*, with her braided hair,
And many a barbarous form is seen,
To chide the man that lingers there.

By midnight moons, o'er moistening dews,
In habit for the chase arrayed,
The hunter still the deer pursues,
The hunter and the deer a shade.

And long shall timorous fancy see
The painted chief and pointed spear,
And Reason's self shall bow the knee
To shadows and delusions here.

PHILIP FRENEAU

STOPPING BY WOODS ON A SNOWY EVENING

WHOSE woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.

Death

The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

ROBERT FROST

I WAGE NOT ANY FEUD
WITH DEATH

I WAGE not any feud with Death
For changes wrought on form and face;
No lower life that earth's embrace
May breed with him can fright my faith.

Eternal process moving on,
From state to state the spirit walks;
And these are but the shattered stalks,
Or ruined chrysalis of one.

Nor blame I Death, because he bare
The use of virtue out of earth;
I know transplanted human worth
Will bloom to profit, elsewhere.

For this alone on Death I wreak
The wrath that garners in my heart:
He put our lives so far apart
We cannot hear each other speak.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

THE GARDEN OF PROSERPINE

HERE, where the world is quiet;
Here, where all trouble seems
Dead winds' and spent waves' riot
In doubtful dreams of dreams;
I watch the green field growing
For reaping folk and sowing,
For harvest-time and mowing,
A sleepy world of streams.

I am tired of tears and laughter,
And men that laugh and weep;
Of what may come hereafter
For men that sow to reap:
I am weary of days and hours,
Blown buds of barren flowers,
Desires and dreams and powers
And everything but sleep.

Here life has death for neighbour,
And far from eye or ear
Wan waves and wet winds labour,
Weak ships and spirits steer;
They drive adrift, and whither
They wot not who make thither;
But no such winds blow hither,
And no such things grow here.

No growth of moor or coppice,
No heather-flower or vine,
But bloomless buds of poppies,
Green grapes of Proserpine,
Pale beds of blowing rushes .

Death

Where no leaf blooms or blushes
Save this whereout she crushes
For dead men deadly wine.

Pale, without name or number,
In fruitless fields of corn,
They bow themselves and slumber
All night till light is born;
And like a soul belated,
In hell and heaven unmated,
By cloud and mist abated
Comes out of darkness morn.

Though one were strong as seven,
He too with death shall dwell,
Nor wake with wings in heaven,
Nor weep for pains in hell;
Though one were fair as roses,
His beauty clouds and closes;
And well though love reposes,
In the end it is not well.

Pale, beyond porch and portal,
Crowned with calm leaves, she stands
Who gathers all things mortal
With cold immortal hands;
Her languid lips are sweeter
Than love's who fears to greet her
To men that mix and meet her
From many times and lands.

She waits for each and other,
She waits for all men born;
Forgets the earth her mother,
The life of fruits and corn;

And spring and seed and swallow
Take wing for her and follow
Where summer song rings hollow
And flowers are put to scorn.

There go the loves that wither,
The old loves with wearier wings;
And all dead years draw thither,
And all disastrous things;
Dead dreams of days forsaken,
Blind buds that snows have shaken,
Wild leaves that winds have taken,
Red strays of ruined springs.

We are not sure of sorrow,
And joy was never sure;
Today will die tomorrow;
Time stoops to no man's lure;
And love, grown faint and fretful,
With lips but half regretful
Sighs, and with eyes forgetful
Weeps that no loves endure.

From too much love of living,
From hope and fear set free,
We thank with brief thanksgiving
Whatever gods may be
That no life lives for ever;
That dead men rise up never;
That even the weariest river
Winds somewhere safe to sea.

Then star nor sun shall waken,
Nor any change of light:
Nor sound of waters shaken,

Death

Nor any sound or sight:
Nor wintry leaves nor vernal,
Nor days nor things diurnal:
Only the sleep eternal
In an eternal night.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

THERE'S A CERTAIN SLANT
OF LIGHT

THERE'S a certain slant of light,
On winter afternoons,
That oppresses, like the weight
Of cathedral tunes.

Heavenly hurt it gives us;
We can find no scar,
But internal difference
Where the meanings are.

None may teach it anything,
'Tis the seal, despair,—
An imperial affliction
Sent us of the air.

When it comes, the landscape listens,
Shadows hold their breath;
When it goes, 'tis like the distance
On the look of death.

EMILY DICKINSON

A RUEFUL LAMENTATION ON THE
DEATH OF QUEEN ELIZABETH

O YE that put your trust and confidence
In worldly joy and frail prosperity,
That so live here as ye should never hence,
Remember death and look here upon me.
Ensample I think there may no better be.
Your self wot well that in this realm was I
Your queen but late, and lo now here I lie.

Was I not born of old worthy lineage?
Was not my mother queen, my father king?
Was I not a king's fere in marriage?
Had I not plenty of every pleasant thing?
Merciful God, this is a strange reckoning:
Riches, honor, wealth and ancestry
Hath me forsaken, and lo now here I lie.

If worship might have kept me, I had not gone.
If wit might have me saved, I needed not fear.
If money might have helped, I lacked none.
But O good God what availeth all this gear?
When death is come, thy mighty messenger,
Obey we must, there is no remedy;
Me hath he summoned, and lo now here I lie.

Yet was I late promised otherwise,
This year to live in wealth and delico.
Lo whereto cometh thy blandishing promise,
O false astrology and divinatrice,
Of God's secrets making thy self so wise?

Death

How true is for this year thy prophecy!
The year yet lasteth, and lo now here I lie.

O brittle wealth, aye full of bitterness,
Thy single pleasure doubled is with pain.
Account my sorrow first and my distress,
In sundry wise, and reckon there again
The joy that I have had, and dare sayn,
For all my honor, endured yet have I
More woe than wealth, and lo now here I lie.

Where are our castles now, where are our towers?
Goodly Richmond, soon art thou gone from me;
At Westminster that costly work of yours,
Mine own dear lord, now shall I never see.
Almighty God vouchsafe to grant that yo
For you and your children well may edify.
My palace builded is, and lo now here I lie.

SIR THOMAS MORE

MUSIC, WHEN SOFT VOICES DIE

Music, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory;
Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken.

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heap'd for the beloved's bed;
And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,
Love itself shall slumber on!

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

SONG

WHEN I am dead, my dearest,
Sing no sad songs for me;
Plant thou no roses at my head,
Nor shady cypress tree:
Be the green grass above me
With showers and dewdrops wet;
And if thou wilt, remember,
And if thou wilt, forget.

I shall not see the shadows,
I shall not feel the rain;
I shall not hear the nightingale
Sing on, as if in pain;
And dreaming through the twilight
That doth not rise nor set,
Haply I may remember,
And haply may forget.

CHRISTINA GEORGINA ROSSETTI

THANATOPSIS

To him who in the love of Nature holds
Communion with her visible forms, she speaks
A various language; for his gayer hours
She has a voice of gladness, and a smile
And eloquence of beauty, and she glides
Into his darker musings, with a mild
And healing sympathy, that steals away
Their sharpness, ere he is aware. When thoughts
Of the last bitter hour come like a blight
Over thy spirit, and sad images

Death

Of the stern agony, and shroud, and pall,
And breathless darkness, and the narrow house,
Make thee to shudder and grow sick at heart;—
Go forth, under the open sky, and list
To Nature's teachings, while from all around—
Earth and her waters, and the depths of air—
Comes a still voice—Yet a few days, and thee
The all-beholding sun shall see no more
In all his course; nor yet in the cold ground,
Where thy pale form was laid with many tears,
Nor in the embrace of ocean, shall exist
Thy image. Earth, that nourish'd thee, shall claim
Thy growth, to be resolved to earth again,
And, lost each human trace, surrendering up
Thine individual being, shalt thou go
To mix for ever with the elements,
To be a brother to the insensible rock,
And to the sluggish clod, which the rude swain
Turns with his share, and treads upon. The oak
Shall send his roots abroad, and pierce thy mould.

Yet not to thine eternal resting-place
Shalt thou retire alone, nor couldst thou wish
Couch more magnificent. Thou shalt lie down
With patriarchs of the infant world—with kings,
The powerful of the earth—the wise, the good,
Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past,
All in one mighty sepulchre. The hills
Rock-ribb'd and ancient as the sun,—the vales
Stretching in pensive quietness between;
The venerable woods; rivers that move
In majesty, and the complaining brooks
That make the meadows green; and, pour'd round all,
Old Ocean's grey and melancholy waste,—
Are but the solemn decorations all

Of the great tomb of man. The golden sun,
The planets, all the infinite host of heaven,
Are shining on the sad abodes of death,
Through the still lapse of ages. All that tread
The globe are but a handful to the tribes
That slumber in its bosom.—Take the wings
Of morning, pierce the Barcan wilderness,
Or lose thyself in the continuous woods
Where rolls the Oregon and hears no sound
Save his own dashings—yet the dead are there:
And millions in those solitudes, since first
The flight of years began, have laid them down
In their last sleep—the dead reign there alone.
So shalt thou rest: and what if thou withdraw
In silence from the living, and no friend
Take note of thy departure? All that breathe
Will share thy destiny. The gay will laugh
When thou art gone, the solemn brood of care
Plod on, and each one as before will chase
His favourite phantom; yet all these shall leave
Their mirth and their employments, and shall come
And make their bed with thee. As the long train
Of ages glide away, the sons of men,
The youth in life's green spring, and he who goes
In the full strength of years, matron and maid,
The speechless babe, and the grey-headed man—
Shall one by one be gathered to thy side
By those who in their turn shall follow them.

So live, that when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan which moves
To that mysterious realm where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon; but, sustain'd and soothed

Death

By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave,
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

OF ONE DEAD

If one should bring me this report,
That thou hadst touched the land to-day,
And I went down unto the quay,
And found thee lying in the port;

And standing, muffled round with woe,
Should see thy passengers in rank
Come stepping lightly down the plank,
And beckoning unto those they know;

And if along with these should come
The man I held as half-divine;
Should strike a sudden hand in mine,
And ask a thousand things of home;

And I should tell him all my pain,
And how my life had droop'd of late,
And he should sorrow o'er my state
And marvel what possess'd my brain;

And I perceived no touch of change,
No hint of death in all his frame,
But found him all in all the same,
I should not feel it to be strange.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

DIRGE WITHOUT MUSIC

I AM not resigned to the shutting away of loving hearts
in the hard ground.
So it is, and so it will be, for so it has been, time out of
mind:
Into the darkness they go, the wise and the lovely.
Crowned
With lilies and with laurel they go; but I am not resigned.

Lovers and thinkers, into the earth with you.
Be one with the dull, the indiscriminate dust.
A fragment of what you felt, of what you knew,
A formula, a phrase remains,—but the best is lost.

The answers quick and keen, the honest look, the laugh-
ter, the love,—
They are gone. They have gone to feed the roses. Ele-
gant and curled
Is the blossom. Fragrant is the blossom. I know. But I do
not approve.
More precious was the light in your eyes than all the roses
in the world.

Down, down, down into the darkness of the grave
Gently they go, the beautiful, the tender, the kind;
Quietly they go, the intelligent, the witty, the brave.
I know. But I do not approve. And I am not resigned.

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

SHE DWELT AMONG THE
UNTRODDEN WAYS

She dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove,
A maid whom there were none to praise
And very few to love:

A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye!
—Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and, oh,
The difference to me!

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

A FORSAKEN GARDEN

In a coign of the cliff between lowland and highland,
At the sea-down's edge between windward and lee,
Walled round with rocks as an inland island,
The ghost of a garden fronts the sea.
A girdle of brushwood and thorn encloses
The steep square slope of the blossomless bed
Where the weeds that grew green from the graves of its
roses
Now lie dead.

Death

The fields fall southward, abrupt and broken,
To the low last edge of the long lone land.
If a step should sound or a word be spoken,
Would a ghost not rise at the strange guest's hand?
So long have the grey bare walks lain guestless,
Through branches and briers if a man make way
He shall find no life but the sea-wind's, restless
Night and day.

The dense hard passage is blind and stifled
That crawls by a track none turn to climb
To the strait waste place that the years have rilled
Of all but the thorns that are touched not of time.
The thorns he spares when the rose is taken;
The rocks are left when he wastes the plain.
The wind that wanders, the weeds wind-shaken,
These remain.

Not a flower to be pressed of the foot that falls not;
As the heart of a dead man the seed-plots are dry;
From the thicket of thorns whence the nightingale calls
not,
Could she call, there were never a rose to reply.
Over the meadows that blossom and wither
Rings but the note of a sea-bird's song;
Only the sun and the rain come hither
All year long.

The sun burns sere and the rain dishevels
One gaunt bleak blossom of scentless breath.
Only the wind here hovers and revels
In a round where life seems barren as death.
Here there was laughing of old, there was weeping,
Haply, of lovers none ever will know,
Whose eyes went seaward a hundred sleeping
Years ago.

Death

Heart handfast in heart as they stood, 'Look thither.'

Did he whisper? 'Look forth from the flowers to the sea;
For the foam-flowers endure when the rose-blossoms
wither,

And men that love lightly may die—but we?'
And the same wind sang and the same waves whitened,
And or ever the garden's last petals were shed,
In the lips that had whispered, the eyes that had light-
ened,

Love was dead.

Or they loved their life through, and then went whither?

And were one to the end—but what end who knows?
Love deep as the sea as a rose must wither,

As the rose-red seaweed that mocks the rose.
Shall the dead take thought for the dead to love them?

What love was ever as deep as a grave?
They are loveless now as the grass above them,
Or the wave.

All are at one now, roses and lovers,

Not known of the cliffs and the fields and the sea.
Not a breath of the time that has been hovers

In the air now soft with a summer to be.
Not a breath shall there sweeten the seasons hereafter
Of the flowers or the lovers that laugh now or weep
When as they that are free now of weeping and laughter
We shall sleep.

Here death may deal not again for ever;

Here change may come not till all change end.
From the graves they have made they shall rise up never,
Who have left nought living to ravage and rend.
Earth, stones, and thorns of the wild ground growing,
While the sun and the rain live, these shall be;

Death

Till a last wind's breath upon all these blowing
Roll the sea.

Till the slow sea rise and the sheer cliff crumble,
Till terrace and meadow the deep gulfs drink,
Till the strength of the waves of the high tides humble
The fields that lessen, the rocks that shrink;
Here now in his triumph where all things falter,
Stretched out on the spoils that his own hand spread,
As a god self-slain on his own strange altar,
Death lies dead.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

DEATH, BE NOT PROUD

DEATH, be not proud though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so,
For those, whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow,
Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill me.
From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,
Much pleasure, then from thee much more must flow,
And soonest our best men with thee do go,
Rest of their bones and soul's delivery.
Thou art slave to Fate, Chance, kings and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,
And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well,
And better than thy stroke; why swell'st thou then?
One short sleep past, we wake eternally,
And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die.

JOHN DONNE
159

Death

THE GLORIES OF OUR BLOOD
AND STATE

THE glories of our blood and state
Are shadows, not substantial things;
There is no armour against Fate;
Death lays his icy hand on kings:
Sceptre and crown
Must tumble down,
And in the dust be equal made
With the poor crooked scythe and spade.

Some men with swords may reap the field,
And plant fresh laurels where they kill;
But their strong nerves at last must yield;
They tame but one another still:
Early or late,
They stoop to fate,
And must give up their murmuring breath,
When they, pale captives, creep to death.

The garlands wither on your brow,
Then boast no more your mighty deeds;
Upon Death's purple altar now
See where the victor-victim bleeds:
Your heads must come
To the cold tomb;
Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet, and blossom in the dust.

JAMES SHIRLEY

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

O WHAT can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge has withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

I see a lily on thy brow
With anguish moist and fever dew,
And on thy cheeks a fading rose
Fast withereth too.

I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful—a faery's child,
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone,
She looked at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan.

I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long,
For sidelong would she bend, and sing
A faery's song.

Death

She found no roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild, and manna dew,
And sure in language strange she said—
“I love thee true!”

She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she wept and sighed full sore,
And there I shut her wild, wild eyes
With kisses four.

And there she lulled me asleep,
And there I dreamed—ah, woe betide!
The latest dream I ever dreamed
On the cold hill's side.

I saw pale kings and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
They cried—“La Belle Dame sans Merci
Hath thee in thrall!”

I saw their starved lips in the gloam,
With horrid warning gapéd wide,
And I awoke and found me here,
On the cold hill's side.

And this is why I sojourn here,
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

JOHN KEATS

CROSSING THE BAR

SUNSET and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,

But such a *tide as moving seems* asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;

For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have cross'd the bar.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

VITAL SPARK OF HEAVENLY FLAME

VITAL spark of heavenly flame!
Quit, O quit this mortal frame:
Trembling, hoping, lingering, flying,
O the pain, the bliss of dying!

Death

Cease, fond Nature, cease thy strife,
And let me languish into life.

Hark! they whisper; angels say,
Sister Spirit, come away!
What is this absorbs me quite?
Steals my senses, shuts my sight,
Drowns my spirits, draws my breath?
Tell me, my soul, can this be death?

The world recedes; it disappears!
Heav'n opens on my eyes! my ears
With sounds seraphic ring!
Lend, lend your wings! I mount! I fly!
O Grave! where is thy victory?
O Death! where is thy sting?

ALEXANDER POPE

REQUIEM

UNDER the wide and starry sky
Dig the grave and let me lie.
Glad did I live and gladly die,
And I laid me down with a will.

This be the verse you grave for me:
Here he lies where he longed to be;
Home is the sailor, home from sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

Despair, suffering

MUSÉE DES BEAUX ARTS

~~About suffering they were never wrong,~~
The Old Masters: how well they understood
~~Its human position;~~ how it takes place
While someone else is eating or opening a window or
just walking dully along;
How, when the aged are reverently, passionately waiting
For the miraculous birth, there always must be
Children who did not specially want it to happen, skating
On a pond at the edge of the wood:
They never forgot
That even the dreadful martyrdom must run its course
Anyhow in a corner, some untidy spot
Where the dogs go on with their doggy life and the tor-
turer's horse
Scratches its innocent behind on a tree.

In Brueghel's *Icarus*, for instance: how everything turns
away
Quite leisurely from the disaster; the ploughman may
Have heard the splash, the forsaken cry,
But for him it was not an important failure; the sun shone
As it had to on the white legs disappearing into the green
Water; and the expensive delicate ship that must have
seen
Something amazing, a boy falling out of the sky,
Had somewhere to get to and sailed calmly on.

W. H. AUDEN

TO BE, OR NOT TO BE

To be, or not to be: that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? To die: to sleep;
No more; and, by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wished. To die, to sleep;
To sleep: perchance to dream: aye, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause. There's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life;
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of disprized love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscovered country from whose bourn
No traveller returns, puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pith and moment

Despair, suffering

With this regard their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
(from *Hamlet*)

VIXI PUELLIS NUPER IDONEUS . . .

THEY flee from me that sometime did me seek,
With naked foot stalking in my chamber:
I have seen them gentle, tame, and meek,
That now are wild, and do not once remember
That sometime they have put themselves in danger
To take bread at my hand; and now they range,
Busily seeking with a continual change.

Thanked be fortune, it hath been otherwise
Twenty times better; but once, in special,
In thin array, after a pleasant guise,
When her loose gown from her shoulders did fall,
And she me caught in her arms long and small,
Therewith all sweetly did me kiss,
And softly said, '*Dear heart, how like you this?*'

It was no dream; I lay broad waking;
But all is turned, thorough my gentleness,
Into a strange fashion of forsaking;
And I have leave to go, of her goodness;
And she also to use new-fangleness.
But since that I so unkindly am served,
I fain would know what she hath dese

Despair, suffering

WHEN THE LAMP IS SHATTERED

WHEN the lamp is shattered
The light in the dust lies dead—
When the cloud is scattered
The rainbow's glory is shed.
When the lute is broken,
Sweet tones are remembered not;
When the lips have spoken,
Loved accents are soon forgot.

As music and splendour
Survive not the lamp and the lute,
The heart's echoes render
No song when the spirit is mute:—
No song but sad dirges,
Like the wind through a ruined cell,
Or the mournful surges
That ring the dead seaman's knell.

When hearts have once mingled
Love leaves the well-built nest;
The weak one is singled
To endure what it once possessed.
O Love! who bewailest
The frailty of all things here,
Why choose you the frailest
For your cradle, your home, and your bier?

Its passions will rock thee
As the storms rock the ravens on high;
Bright reason will mock thee,
Like the sun from a wintry sky.

Despair, suffering

From thy nest every rafter
Will rot, and thine eagle home
Leave thee naked to laughter,
When leaves fall and cold winds come.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

MUNICH ELEGY NO. 1

THOSE occasions involving the veering of axles
When the wheel's bloody spikes like Arabian armaments
Release Passchendaele on us because it is time, bring
Also with blood to the breast the boon to the bosom:
I saw it happen, had near me the gun and the tear.
Those occasions are all elegiac. The wheel and the wish
Turn in a turtle the chaos of life. It is death,
Death like roulette turning our wish to its will.

I see a scene with a smother of snow over Love.
I know Spring will arise and later the swallow return;
I know, but my torso stands bogged in a load of time,
Like Love lying under the smother of our death and our
Dread. How soon shall the Spring bird arise and the
Summer bells hum with the murmur of our name?

Soon, soon,
Soon the green room goes blue with the last autumn.

I sip at suicide in bedrooms or dare pessimistic stars,
Keep pigeons with messages or make tame a
Commemorate in mime the master me who r
Or commit crimes of rage or rape to ease the a
I promise these cannot precipitate fate. No,

Despair, suffering

WHEN THE LAMP IS SHATTERED

WHEN the lamp is shattered
The light in the dust lies dead—
When the cloud is scattered
The rainbow's glory is shed.
When the lute is broken,
Sweet tones are remembered not;
When the lips have spoken,
Loved accents are soon forgot.

As music and splendour
Survive not the lamp and the lute,
The heart's echoes render
No song when the spirit is mute:—
No song but sad dirges,
Like the wind through a ruined cell,
Or the mournful surges
That ring the dead seaman's knell.

When hearts have once mingled
Love leaves the well-built nest;
The weak one is singled
To endure what it once possessed.
O Love! who bewailest
The frailty of all things here,
Why choose you the frailest
For your cradle, your home, and your bier?

Its passions will rock thee
As the storms rock the ravens on high;
Bright reason will mock thee,
Like the sun from a wintry sky.

Despair, suffering

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Summer bells hum with the murmur of our name?

Soon, soon,
Soon the green room goes blue with the last autumn.

I sip at suicide in bedrooms or dare pessimistic stars,
Keep pigeons with messages or make tame apes
Commemorate in mime the master me who must go;
Or commit crimes of rage or rape to ease the ache:
I promise these cannot precipitate fate. No,

Despair, suffering

To-morrow it is not, it is not to-day, it is not
Wednesday or Thursday. It is the greatest day.

That morning not the rose shall rise or dog dance,
Kings with conscience and queens with child sleep long,
For duty is useless; the soldier and sailor glance
Down at their guns with a grin, but they are wrong.
The dodo shall rule for a moment, and the Thames
Remember. Invalids and paralytics shall sing
 'No more, no more!'
I shall hear the ceremony of heaven and God's roar.

What awaits is the veer of the lever and wheel
When the hands cross at midnight and noon, the future
Sweeps on with a sigh—but on this occasion Time
Swells like a wave at a wall and bursts to eternity.
I await when the engine of lilies and lakes and love
Reaching its peak of power blows me sky high, and I
 Come down to rest
On the shape I made in the ground where I used to lie.

O widow, do not weep, do not weep! Or wife
Cry in the corner of the window with a child by—
Look how Tottenham and the Cotswolds, with
More mass than a man, lie easy under the sky,
Also awaiting change they cannot understand.
'I have heaven a haven in my hand,' say,
 Like the boy
Cornering butterflies or nothing in cupped hands.

The tragedy is Time foreshadowing its climax.
Thus in the stage of time the minor moth is small
But prophesies the Fokker with marvellous wings
Mottled with my sun's gold and your son's blood.
170

Despair, suffering

The crazy anthropoid crawls on time's original
That casts his giant on the contemporary scene:
That spreadeagled shadow
Covers with horror the green Abyssinian meadow.

Lovers on Sunday in the rear seats of cinemas
Kiss deep and dark, for is it the last kiss?
Children sailing on swings in municipal parks
Swing high, swing high into the reach of the sky,
Leave, leave the sad star that is about to die.
Laugh, my comedians, who may not laugh again—
Soon, soon,
Soon Jeremiaah Job will be walking among men.

GEORGE BARKER

CARRION COMFORT

Not, I'll not, carrion comfort, Despair, not feast on thee;
Not untwist—slack they may be—these last strands of man
In me or, most weary, cry *I can no more*. I can;
Can something, hope, wish day come, not choose not to
be.
But ah, but O thou terrible, why wouldst thou rude on
me
Thy wring-world right foot rock? lay a lionlimb against
me? scan
With darksome devouring eyes my bruised bones? and
fan,
O in turns of tempest, me heaped there; me frantic to
avoid thee and flee?
Why? That my chaff might fly; my grain lie, sheer and
clear.

Despair, suffering

Nay in all that toil, that coil, since (seems) I kissed the
rod,
Hand rather, my heart lol lapped strength, stole joy,
would laugh, *chécér*.
Cheer whom though? the hero whose heaven-handling
flung me, *fóot tród*
Me? or me that fought him? O which one? is it each one?
That night, that year
Of now done darkness I wretch lay wrestling with (my
God!) my God.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

TO THE NIGHTINGALE

As it fell upon a day,
In the merry month of May,
Sitting in a pleasant shade
Which a grove of myrtles made,
Beasts did leap, and birds did sing,
Trees did grow, and plants did spring;
Everything did banish moan,
Save the nightingale alone.
She, poor bird, as all forlorn,
Leaned her breast up-till a thorn;
And there sung the doleful'st ditty
That to hear it was great pity.
Fie, fie, fie! now would she cry;
Teru, teru, by and by;
That, to hear her so complain,
Scarce I could from tears refrain;
For her griefs, so lively shown,
Made me think upon mine own.
Ah! (thought I) thou mourn'st in vain;
None takes pity on thy pain;

Despair, suffering

Senseless trees, they cannot hear thee,
Ruthless bears, they will not cheer thee;
King Pandion, he is dead;
All thy friends are lapped in lead:
All thy fellow-birds do sing,
Careless of thy sorrowing!
Whilst as fickle Fortune smiled,
Thou and I were both beguiled,
Every one that flatters thee
Is no friend in misery.
Words are easy, like the wind;
Faithful friends are hard to find.
Every man will be thy friend
Whilst thou hast wherewith to spend;
But, if stores of crowns be scant,
No man will supply thy want.
If that one be prodigal,
Bountiful they will him call;
And, with such-like flattering,
"Pity but he were a king."
If he be addict to vice,
Quickly him they will entice;
But if Fortune once do frown,
Then farewell his great renown:
They that fawned on him before,
Use his company no more.
He that is thy friend indeed,
He will help thee in thy need;
If thou sorrow, he will weep,
If thou wake, he cannot sleep.
Thus, of every grief in heart,
He with thee doth bear a part.
These are certain signs to know
Faithful friend from flattering foe.

RICHARD BARNEFIELD

Despair, suffering

CARE-CHARMER SLEEP

CARE-CHARMER sleep, son of the sable night,
Brother to death, in silent darkness born,
Relieve my languish and restore the light;
With dark forgetting of my care, return.
And let the day be time enough to mourn
The shipwreck of my ill-adventured youth;
Let waking eyes suffice to wail their scorn
Without the torment of the night's untruth.
Cease, dreams, th' images of day-desires,
To model forth the passions of the morrow;
Never let rising sun approve you liars,
To add more grief to aggravate my sorrow.
Still let me sleep, embracing clouds in vain,
And never wake to feel the day's disdain.

SAMUEL DANIEL

ALL THE FLOWERS OF THE SPRING

ALL the flowers of the spring
Meet to perfume our burying;
These have but their growing prime,
And man doth flourish but his time:
Survey our progress from our birth;
We are set, we grow, we turn to earth.
Courts adieu, and all delights,
All bewitching appetites.
Sweetest breath and clearest eye,
Like perfumes, go out and die;

Despair, suffering

And consequently this is done
As shadows wait upon the sun.
Vain the ambition of kings
Who seek by trophies and dead things
To leave a living name behind,
And weave but nets to catch the wind.

JOHN WEBSTER

TO JESUS ON HIS BIRTHDAY

For this your mother sweated in the cold,
For this you bled upon the bitter tree:
A yard of tinsel ribbon bought and sold;
A paper wreath; a day at home for me.
The merry bells ring out, the people kneel;
Up goes the man of God before the crowd;
With voice of honey and with eyes of steel
He drones your humble gospel to the proud.

Nobody listens. Less than the wind that blows
Are all your words to us you died to save.
O Prince of Peace! O Sharon's dewy Rose!
How mute you lie within your vaulted grave.
The stone the angel rolled away with tears
Is back upon your mouth these thousand years.

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

Despair, suffering

I WAKE AND FEEL THE FELL OF DARK

I wake and feel the fell of dark, not day.
What hours, O what black hours we have spent
This night! what sights you, heart, saw; ways you went!
And more must, in yet longer light's delay.

With witness I speak this. But where I say
Hours I mean years, mean life. And my lament
Is cries countless, cries like dead letters sent
To dearest him that lives alas! away.

I am gall, I am heartburn. God's most deep decree
Bitter would have me taste: my taste was me;
Bones built in me, flesh filled, blood brimmed the curse.

Selfyeast of spirit a dull dough sours. I see
The lost are like this, and their scourge to be
As I am mine, their sweating selves; but worse.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

CAPTAIN CARPENTER

CAPTAIN CARPENTER rose up in his prime
Put on his pistols and went riding out
But had got well nigh nowhere at that time
Till he fell in with ladies in a rout.

It was a pretty lady and all her train
That played with him so sweetly but before
An hour she'd taken a sword with all her main
And twined him of his nose for evermore.

Despair, suffering

Captain Carpenter mounted up one day
And rode straight way into a stranger rogue
That looked unchristian but be that as it may
The Captain did not wait upon prologue.

But drew upon him out of his great heart
The other swung against him with a club
And cracked his two legs at the shinny part
And let him roll and stick like any tub.

Captain Carpenter rode many a time
From male and female took he sundry harms
He met the wife of Satan crying "I'm
The she-wolf bids you shall bear no more arms."

Their strokes and counters whistled in the wind
I wish he had delivered half his blows
But where she should have made off like a hind
The bitch bit off his arms at the elbows.

And Captain Carpenter parted with his ears
To a black devil that used him in this wise
O Jesus ere his threescore and ten years
Another had plucked out his sweet blue eyes

Captain Carpenter got up on his roan
And sallied from the gate in hell's despite
I heard him asking in the grimmest tone
If any enemy yet there was to fight?

"To any adversary it is fame
If he risk to be wounded by my tongue
Or burnt in two beneath my red heart's flame
Such are the perils he is cast among.

Despair, suffering

"But if he can he has a pretty choice
From an anatomy with little to lose
Whether he cut my tongue and take my voice
Or whether it be my round red heart he choose."

It was the neatest knave that ever was seen
Stepping in perfume from his lady's bower
Who at this word put in his merry mien
And fell on Captain Carpenter like a tower.

I would not knock old fellows in the dust
But there lay Captain Carpenter on his back
His weapons were the old heart in his bust
And a blade shook between rotten teeth alack.

The rogue in scarlet and gray soon knew his mind
He wished to get his trophy and depart;
With gentle apology and touch refined
He pierced him and produced the Captain's heart.

God's mercy rest on Captain Carpenter now
I thought him Sirs an honest gentleman
Citizen husband soldier and scholar enow
Let jangling kites eat of him if they can.

But God's deep curses follow after those
That shore him of his goodly nose and ears
His legs and strong arms at the two elbows
And eyes that had not watered seventy years

The curse of hell upon the sleek upstart
Who got the Captain finally on his back
And took the red red vitals of his heart
And made the kites to whet their beaks clack clack.

JOHN CROWE RANSOM

Despair, suffering

THE GARDEN OF LOVE

I WENT to the Garden of Love
And I saw what I never had seen:
A Chapel was built in the midst,
Where I used to play on the green.

And the gates of this Chapel were shut,
And "Thou shalt not" writ over the door;
So I turn'd to the Garden of Love
That so many sweet flowers bore;

And I saw it was filled with graves,
And tomb-stones where flowers should be;
And Priests in black gowns were walking their rounds,
And binding with briars my joys and desires.

WILLIAM BLAKE

RICHARD CORY

WHENEVER Richard Cory went down town,
We people on the pavement looked at him:
He was a gentleman from sole to crown,
Clean favored, and imperially slim.

And he was always quietly arrayed,
And he was always human when he talked;
But still he fluttered pulses when he said,
"Good-morning," and he glittered when he walked.

Despair, suffering

And he was rich—yes, richer than a king,
And admirably schooled in every grace:
In fine, we thought that he was everything
To make us wish that we were in his place.

So on we worked, and waited for the light,
And went without the meat, and cursed the bread;
And Richard Cory, one calm summer night,
Went home and put a bullet through his head.

EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON

THE BLACK PANTHER

THERE is a panther caged within my breast,
But what his name, there is no breast shall know
Save mine, nor what it is that drives him so,
Backward and forward, in relentless quest—
That silent rage, baffled but unsuppressed,
The soft pad of those stealthy feet that go
Over my body's prison to and fro,
Trying the walls forever, without rest.

All day I feed him with my living heart,
But when the night puts forth her dreams and stars,
The inexorable frenzy re-awakes:
His wrath is hurled upon the trembling bars,
The eternal passion stretches me apart,
And I lie silent—but my body shakes.

JOHN HALL WHEELOCK

I SAW A CHAPEL ALL OF GOLD

I saw a Chapel all of gold
That none did dare to enter in,
And many weeping stood without,
Weeping, mourning, worshipping.

I saw a Serpent rise between
The white pillars of the door,
And he forc'd and forc'd and forc'd;
Down the golden hinges tore,

And along the pavement sweet,
Set with pearls and rubies bright,
All his shining length he drew,
Till upon the altar white

Vomiting his poison out
On the Bread and on the Wine.
So I turned into a sty,
And laid me down among the swine.

WILLIAM BLAKE

ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE

ALL the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players:
They have their exits and their entrances;
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,

Imperfection of man

Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms.
And then the whining school-boy, with his satchel,
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school. And then the lover
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then a soldier,
Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation
Even in the cannon's mouth. And then the justice,
In fair round belly with good capon lin'd,
With eyes severe, and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances;
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slipper'd pantaloon,
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side,
His youthful hose well sav'd a world too wide
For his shrunk shank; and his big manly voice,
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second childishness and mere oblivion,
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

(from *As You Like It*)

FLOWER IN THE CRANNIED WALL

FLOWER in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies,
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,

Imperfection of man

Little flower—but *if* I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

FAREWELL TO ALL MY GREATNESS

FAREWELL! a long farewell, to all my greatness!
This is the state of man: to-day he puts forth
The tender leaves of hopes; to-morrow blossoms,
And bears his blushing honours thick upon him;
The third day comes a frost, a killing frost;
And, when he thinks, good easy man, full surely
His greatness is a-ripening, nips his root,
And then he falls, as I do. I have ventured,
Like little wanton boys that swim on bladders,
This many summers in a sea of glory,
But far beyond my depth: my high-blown pride
At length broke under me, and now has left me,
Weary and old with service, to the mercy
Of a rude stream, that must for ever hide me.
Vain pomp and glory of this world, I hate ye:
I feel my heart new opened. O! how wretched
Is that poor man that hangs on princes' favours.
There is, betwixt that smile we would aspire to,
That sweet aspect of princes, and their ruin,
More pangs and fears than wars or women have;
And when he falls, he falls like Lucifer,
Never to hope again.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

(from *King Henry VIII*)

Imperfection of man

IN THE NAKED BED, IN PLATO'S CAVE

In the naked bed, in Plato's cave,
Reflected headlights slowly slid the wall,
Carpenters hammered under the shaded window,
Wind troubled the window curtains all night long,
A fleet of trucks strained uphill, grinding,
Their freights covered, as usual.
The ceiling lightened again, the slanting diagram
Slid slowly forth.

Hearing the milkman's chop,
His striving up the stair, the bottle's chink,
I rose from bed, lit a cigarette,
And walked to the window. The stony street
Displayed the stillness in which buildings stand,
The street-lamp's vigil and the horse's patience.
The winter sky's pure capital
Turned me back to bed with exhausted eyes.

Strangeness grew in the motionless air. The loose
Film grayed. Shaking wagons, hooves' waterfalls,
Sounded far off, increasing, louder and nearer.
A car coughed, starting. Morning, softly
Melting the air, lifted the half-covered chair
From underseas, kindled the looking-glass,
Distinguished the dresser and the white wall.
The bird called tentatively, whistled, called,
Bubbled and whistled, so! Perplexed, still wet
With sleep, affectionate, hungry and cold. So, so,
O son of man, the ignorant night, the travail
Of early morning, the mystery of beginning
Again and again,

while History is unforgiven.

DELMORE SCHWARTZ

THE ANGEL

I ASKED a thief to steal me a peach:
He turn'd up his eyes.
I ask'd a lithe lady to lie her down:
Holy and meek she cries.

As soon as I went an angel came:
He wink'd at the thief
And smil'd at the dame,
And without one word spoke
Had a peach from the tree,
And 'twixt earnest and joke
Enjoy'd the Lady.

WILLIAM BLAKE

ULYSSES ADVISES ACHILLES NOT TO LET SLIP OPPORTUNITY

TIME hath, my Lord, a wallet at his back,
Wherein he puts alms for oblivion, *Oblivion.*
A great-siz'd monster of ingritudes:
Those scraps are good deeds past; which are devour'd
As fast as they are made, forgot as soon
As done: perseverance, dear my Lord,
Keeps honour bright: to have done, is to hang

Imperfection of man

Quite out of fashion, like a rusty mail
In monumental mockery. Take the instant way;
For honour travels in a strait so narrow
Where one but goes abreast: keep, then, the path;
For emulation hath a thousand sons
That one by one pursue: if you give way,
Or hedge aside from the direct forthright,
Like to an enter'd tide they all rush by
And leave you hindmost;
Or, like a gallant horse fall'n in first rank,
Lie there for pavement to the abject rear,
O'errun and trampled on: then what they do in present,
Though less than yours in past, most o'er top yours;
For time is like a fashionable host,
That slightly shakes his parting guest by the hand,
And with his arms outstretched, as he would fly,
Grasps in the comer: welcome ever smiles,
And farewell goes out sighing. O! let not virtue seek
Remuneration for the thing it was;
For beauty, wit,
High birth, vigour of bone, desert in service,
Love, friendship, charity, are subjects all
To envious and calumniating time.
One touch of nature makes the whole world kin,
That all with one consent praise new-born gawds,
Though they are made and moulded of things past,
And give to dust that is a little gilt
More laud than gilt o'er-dusted.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
(from *Troilus and Cressida*)

from A SATYR AGAINST MANKIND

WERE I, who to my cost already am,
One of those strange, prodigious Creatures *Man*,
A Spirit free, to chuse for my own share,
What sort of Flesh and Blood I pleas'd to wear,
I'd be a Dog, a Monkey or a Bear,
Or any thing, but that vain Animal,
Who is so proud of being rational.
The Senses are too gross; and he'll contrive
A sixth to contradict the other five:
And before certain Instinct, will prefer
Reason, which fifty times for one does err—
Reason, an *Ignis fatuus* of the Mind,
Which leaves the Light of Nature, Sense behind.
Pathless, and dangerous, wand'ring ways, it takes,
Through Errour's fenny Bogs, and thorny Brakes:
Whilst the misguided Follower climbs with pain,
Mountains of Whimseys, heapt in his own Brain,
Stumbling from thought to thought, falls headlong down
Into Doubt's boundless Sea, where like to drown,
Books bear him up a while, and make him try
To swim with Bladders of Philosophy,
In hopes still to o'ertake the skipping Light:
The Vapour dances, in his dazzled sight,
Till spent, it leaves him to eternal night.
Then old Age, and Experience, hand in hand,
Lead him to Death, and make him understand,
After a search so painful, and so long,
That all his Life he has been in the wrong.

.

Which is the basest Creature, Man, or Beast?
Birds feed on Birds, Beasts on each other prey;

Imperfection of man

But savage Man alone, does Man betray.
Prest by Necessity, *They* kill for Food;
Man undoes Man, to do himself no good.
With Teeth, and Claws, by Nature arm'd *They* hunt
Nature's allowance, to supply their want:
But Man with Smiles, Embraces, Friendships, Praise,
Inhumanely, his Fellows Life betrays,
With voluntary Pains, works his Distress;
Not through Necessity, but Wantonness.
For Hunger, or for Love *They* bite or tear,
Whilst wretched Man is still in Arms for Fear:
For Fear he arms, and is of Arms afraid;
From Fear, to Fear, successively betray'd.
Base Fear, the Source whence his best Passions came,
His boasted Honour, and his dear-bought Fame,
The Lust of Pow'r, to which he's such a Slave,
And for the which alone he dares be brave:
To which his various Projects are design'd,
Which makes him gen'rous, affable, and kind:
For which he takes such pains to be thought wise,
And scrues his Actions, in a forc'd Disguise:
Leads a most tedious Life, in misery,
Under laborious, mean Hypocrisy.
Look to the bottom of his vast Design,
Wherein Man's Wisdom, Pow'r, and Glory join—
The Good he acts, the Ill he does endure,
'Tis all from Fear, to make himself secure.
Meerly for safety, after Fame they thirst;
For all Men would be Cowards if they durst:
And Honesty's against all common sense—
Men must be Knaves; 'tis in their own defence,
Mankind's dishonest; if they think it fair,
Amongst known Cheats, to play upon the square,
You'll be undone—
Nor can weak Truth, your Reputation save,

Imperfection of man

The Knaves will all agree to call you Knave.
Wrong'd shall he live, insulted o'er, oppress'd,
Who dares be less a Villain than the rest.
Thus here you see what Human Nature craves,
Most Men are Cowards, all Men shou'd be Knaves.
The Difference lies, as far as I can see,
Not in the thing it self, but the degree;
And all the subject matter of Debate,
Is only who's a Knave of the first Rate.

Epilogue to the Satire of Man

All this with indignation have I hurl'd,
At the pretending part of the proud World,
Who swol'n with selfish vanity, devise,
False freedoms, holy Cheats, and formal Lyes
Over their fellow Slaves to tyrranizo.
But if at all, so just a Man there be,
(At all a just Man, of that blest degree)
Who does his needful flattery direct,
Not to oppress, and ruine, but protect;
Since flattery which way so ever laid,
Is still a Tax on that unhappy Trade.
If so upright a Patriot, you can find,
Whose passions bend to his unbyas'd Mind;
Who does his Arts, and Policies apply,
To raise his Country, not his Family;
Who holdly fatal, Avarice withstands,
And tempting Bribes, from Friends corrupting Hands.
Is there a Mortal who on God relies?
Whose Life, his Faith, and Doctrine Justifies?
Not one blown up, with vain aspiring Pride,
Who for reproof of Sins, does Man deride:
Whose envious Heart with sawcy Eloquence,
Dares chide at Kings, and rail at Men of sense.

Imperfection of man

Who in his talking vents more pceevish lies,
More bitter railings, scandals, Calumnies,
Than at a Gossiping, are thrown about,
When the good Wives get drunk, and then fall out,
None of that sensual Tribe, whose Talents lye,
In Avarice, Pride, Sloath, and Gluttony.
Who hunt Preferment, but abhor good Lives,
Whose lust exalted, to that height arrives,
They act Adult'ry with their Neighbours' Wives
And e're a score of years compleated be,
Can from the lofty Stage of Honour see,
Half a large Parish their own Progeny.

Nor doating he who wou'd be ador'd,
For domineering when at's height he's soared,
A greater Fop, in business at fourscore,
Fonder of serious Toyes, affected more,
Than the gay glitt'ring Fool at twenty proves,
With all his noise, his tawdrey Cloaths and Loves.

But a meek humble Man of modest sense,
Who preaching peace does practice continence;
Whose pious life's a proof he does believe,
Misterious truths, which no Man can conceive.
If upon Earth there dwell such Godlike Men,
I'll here recant my Paradox to them.
Adore those Shrines of Vertue, Homage pay,
And with the thinking World, their Laws obey.
If such there are, yet grant me this at least,
Man differs more from Man, than Man from Beast.

JOHN WILMOT, *Earl of Rochester*

THEY THAT HAVE POWER TO HURT

THEY that have power to hurt, and will do none,
That do not do the thing they most do show,
Who, moving others, are themselves as stone,
Unmovèd, cold, and to temptation slow,—
They rightly do inherit heaven's graces,
And husband nature's riches from expense;
They are the lords and owners of their faces,
Others, but stewards of their excellence.
The summer's flower is to the summer sweet
Though to itself it only live and die;
But if that flower with base infection meet,
The basest weed outbraves his dignity:
For sweetest things turn sourest by their deeds;
Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

W O M A N

WHEN lovely woman stoops to folly,
And finds too late that men betray,
What charm can soothe her melancholy?
What art can wash her tears away?

The only art her guilt to cover,
To hide her shame from ev'ry eye,
To give repentance to her lover,
And wring his bosom is—to die.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

THE HEAVY BEAR

"the withness of the body"

—WHITEHEAD

THE heavy bear who goes with me,
A manifold honey to smear his face,
Clumsy and lumbering here and there,
The central ton of every place,
The hungry beating brutish one
In love with candy, anger, and sleep,
Crazy factotum, dishevelled all,
Climbs the building, kicks the football,
Boxes his brother in the hate-ridden city.

Breathing at my side, that heavy animal,
That heavy bear who sleeps with me,
Howls in his sleep for a world of sugar,
A sweetness intimate as the water's clasp,
Howls in his sleep because the tight-rope
Trembles and shows the darkness beneath.
—The strutting show-off is terrified,
Dressed in his dress-suit, bulging his pants,
Trembles to think that his quivering meat
Must finally wince to nothing at all.

That inescapable animal walks with me,
Has followed me since the black womb held,
Moves where I move, distorting my gesture,
A caricature, a swollen shadow,
A stupid clown of the spirit's motive,
Perplexes and affronts with his own darkness,
The secret life of belly and bone,
Opaque, too near, my private, yet unknown,

The body

Stretches to embrace the very dear
With whom I would walk without him near,
Touches her grossly, although a word
Would bare my heart and make me clear,
Stumbles, flounders, and strives to be fed
Dragging me with him in his mouthing care,
Amid the hundred million of his kind,
The scrimmage of appetite everywhere.

DELMORE SCHWARTZ

PAINTED HEAD

By dark severance the apparition head
Smiles from the air a capital on no
Column or a Platonic perhaps head
On a canvas sky depending from nothing;

Stirs up an old illusion of grandeur
By tickling the instinct of heads to be
Absolute and to try decapitation
And to play truant from the body bush;

But too happy and beautiful for those sorts
Of head (homekeeping heads are happiest)
Discovers maybe thirty unwidowed years
Of not dishonoring the faithful stem;

Is nameless and has authored for the evil
Historian headhunters neither book
Nor state and is therefore distinct from tart
Heads with crowns and guilty gallery heads;

Mourning

So that the extravagant device of art
Unhousing by abstraction this once head
Was capital irony by a loving hand
That knew the no treason of a head like this;

Makes repentance in an unlovely head
For having vinegarly traduced the flesh
Till, the hurt flesh recusing, the hard egg
Is shrunken to its own deathlike surface;

And an image thus. The body bears the head
(So hardly one they terribly are two)
Feeds and obeys and unto please what end?
Not to the glory of tyrant head but to

The increase of body. Beauty is of body.
The flesh contouring shallowly on a head
Is a rock-garden needing body's love
And best bodiness to colorify

The big blue birds sitting and sea-shell flats
And caves, and on the iron acropolis
To spread the hyacinthine hair and rear
The olive garden for the nightingales.

JOHN CROWE RANSOM

SONG FROM ÆLLA

O SING unto my roundelay,
O drop the briny tear with me;
Dance no more at holyday,
Like a running river be:

Mourning

My love is dead,
Gone to his death-bed
All under the willow-tree.

Black his cryne as the winter night,
White his rode as the summer snow,
Red his face as the morning light,
Cold he lies in the grave below:
My love is dead,
Gone to his death-bed
All under the willow-tree.

Sweet his tongue as the throstle's note,
Quick in dance as thought can be,
Deft his tabor, cudgel stout;
O he lies by the willow-tree!
My love is dead,
Gone to his death-bed
All under the willow-tree.

Hark! the raven flaps his wing
In the brier'd dell below;
Hark! the death-owl loud doth sing
To the nightmares, as they go:
My love is dead,
Gone to his death-bed
All under the willow-tree.

See! the white moon shines on high;
Whiter is my true-love's shroud:
Whiter than the morning sky,
Whiter than the evening cloud:
My love is dead,

ryne] hair

rode] complexion

dent] fasten

grec] grow

ouph] elf

Mourning

Gone to his death-bed
All under the willow-tree.

Here upon my true-love's grave
Shall the barren flowers be laid;
Not one holy saint to save
All the coldness of a maid:
 My love is dead,
 Gone to his death-bed
All under the willow-tree.

With my hands I'll dent the briers
Round his holy corse to gree;
Ouph and fairy, light your fires,
Here my body still shall be:
 My love is dead,
 Gone to his death-bed
All under the willow-tree.

Come, with acorn-cup and thorn,
Drain my heart's blood away;
Life and all its good I scorn,
Dance by night, or feast by day:
 My love is dead,
 Gone to his death-bed
All under the willow-tree.

THOMAS CHATTERTON

ELEGY

*On Gordon Barber, Lamentably Drowned in his
Eighteenth Year*

WILK in the mirror of a permanent tear
Over the iris of your mother's eye
I behold the dark tremor of your face, austere
With space of death, spun too benign for youth,
Icele of the past to pierce her living sigh—
I saw you wish the last kiss of mother's mouth,
Who took the salted waters rather in the suck
Of seas, sighing yourself to fill and drench
With water the plum-rich glory of your breast
Where beat the heart escaping from war's luck.

Gordon, I mourn your wrist, your running foot,
Your curious brows, your thigh, your unborn daughters,
Yet mourn more deep the drought-caught war dry boy
Who goes, a killer, to join you in your sleep
And envy you what made you blench
'Taking your purple back to drought-less waters.
What choke of terror filled you in the wet
What fierce surprise caught you when play turned fate
And all the rains you loved became your net,
Formlessly yielding, yet stronger than your breath?
Then did you dream of mother or hopes hatched
When the cold cramp held you from nape to foot
And time dissolved, promise dissolved, in Death?
Did you cry 'cruel' to all the hands that stretched
Not near, but played afar, when you sank down
Your sponge of lungs hurt to the quick
Till you had left the quick to join the dead,

Mourning

Whom, now, your mother mourns grief-sick.
You were too young to drown.

Never will you take bride to happy bed,
Who lay awash in water yet no laving
Needed, so pure so young for sudden leaving.

Gone, gone is Gordon, tall and brilliant lad
Whose mind was science. Now hollow his skull
A noble sculpture, is but sunken bone,
His cells from water come by water laid
Grave-deep, to water gone.
Lost, lost the hope he had
Washed to a cipher his splendour and his skill.

But Gordon's gone, it's other boys who live afraid.

Two years, and lads have grown to hold a gun.
In dust must splendid lads go down and choke,
Red dry their hands and dry their one day's sun
From which they earthward fall to fiery tomb
Bomb-weighted, from bloodying children's hair.

Never a boy but takes as cross Cain's crime
And goes to death by making death, to pass
Death's gate distorted with the dried brown grime—
Better the watery death than death by air
Or death by sand
Where fall hard fish of fear
Loud in unwetted dust.

Spun on a lucky wave, O early boy!
Now ocean's fish you are
As heretofore.

Mourning

Perhaps you had sweet mercy's tenderness
To win so soon largesse of choice
That you, by grace, went gayly to the wave
And all our mourning should be to rejoice.

1942

GENE DERWOOD

ROSE AYLMER

AH, what avails the sceptred race,
Ah, what the form divinest
What every virtue, every grace!
Rose Aylmer, all were thine.
Rose Aylmer, whom those wakeful eyes
May weep, but never see,
A night of memories and of sighs
I consecrate to thee.

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

MEMORIAL

*(For two young seamen lost overboard in a storm in
Mid-Pacific, January 1940)*

I

THE seagull, spradeagled, splayed on the wind,
Span backwards shrieking, belly facing upward,
Fled backwards with a gimlet in its heart
To see the two youths swimming hand in hand
Through green eternity. O swept overboard

Mourning

Whom, now, your mother mourns grief-sick,
You were too young to drown.

Never will you take bride to happy bed,
Who lay awash in water yet no laving
Needed, so pure so young for sudden leaving.

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1942

GENE DERWOOD

ROSE AYLMER

Art, what avails the sceptred race,
Ah, what the form divine!
What every virtue, every grace!
Rose Aylmer, all were thine.
Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes
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Through green eternity. O swept overboard

Mourning

Not could the thirty-foot jaws them part,
On the flouncing skirts that swept them over
Separate what death pronounced was love.
I saw them, the hand flapping like a flag,
And another like a dolphin with a child
Supporting him. Was I the shape of Jesus
When to me hopeward their eyeballs swivelled
Saw I was standing in the posture of vague
Horror, oh paralyzed with mere pity's peace?

II

From thorax of storms the voices of verbs
Shall call to me without sound, like the vowel
Round which cyclones rage, to nurse my nerve,
My shaken, my broken, my oh I shall grovel
Heart. I taste sea swelling in my bowels,
As now I sit shivering in the swing of waves
Like a face in a bubble. As the hull heaves
I and my mind go walking over hell.
The greedy bitch with sailors in her guts,
Green as a dream and formidable as God,
Spitting at stars, gnawing at shores, mad, randy,
Riots with us on her abdomen and puts
Eternity in our cabins, pitches our pod
To the mouth of the death for which no one is ready.

III

At midday they looked up and saw their death
Standing up overhead as loud as thunder
As white as angels and formidable as God:
Then, then the shock, the last gasp of breath,
As grazing the bulwarks they swept over and under,
All the green arms around them that load

Mourning

Their eyes, their ears, their stomachs with eternal,
Whirled away in a white pool to the stern.
But the most possible of all miracles
Is that the useful tear that did not fall
From the corner of their eyes, was the prize,
The flowers, the gifts, the crystal sepulcher,
The funeral contribution and memorial,
The perfect and non-existent obsequies.

GEORGE BARKER

REQUIESCAT

SHEW on her roses, roses,
And never a spray of yew.
In quiet she reposes:
Ahl would that I did too.

Her mirth the world required:
She bathed it in smiles of glee.
But her heart was tired, tired,
And now they let her be.

Her life was turning, turning,
In mazes of heat and sound.
But for peace her soul was yearning,
And now peace laps her round.

Her cabin'd, ample Spirit,
It flutter'd and fail'd for breath.
To-night it doth inherit
The vasty hall of Death.

MATTHEW ARNOLD

Mourning

ELEGY WRITTEN IN
A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD

THE curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds;

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tow'r
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wand'ring near her secret bow'r,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mould'ring heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude Forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing Morn,
The swallow twitt'ring from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care:
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Mourning

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
 Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke:
How jocund did they drive their team afield!
 How bow'd the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
 Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
 The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of pow'r,
 And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Awaits alike th' inevitable hour:
 The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault,
 It Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
 The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
 Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
 Or Flatt'ry soothe the dull cold ear of Death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
 Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have sway'd,
 Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page
 Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll;
Chill Penury repress'd their noble rage,
 And froze the genial current of the soul.

Mourning

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear:
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village Hampden that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute inglorious Milton, here may rest,
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

Th' applause of list'ning senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbade: nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined;
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind,

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife
Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray;
Along the cool sequester'd vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

Yet ev'n these bones from insult to protect
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture deck'd,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Mourning

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unletter'd muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply;
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb Forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resign'd,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing ling'ring look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
E'en from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
E'en in our Ashes live their wonted Fires.

For thee, who, mindful of th' unhonour'd dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;
If chance, by lonely contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,

Haply some hoary-headed Swain may say,
"Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

"There at the foot of yonder nodding beech
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

"Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Mutt'ring his wayward fancies he would rove,
Now drooping, woeful wan, like one forlorn,
Or crazed with care, or cross'd in hopeless love.

Mourning

"One morn I miss'd him on the custom'd hill,
Along the heath and near his fav'rite tree;
Another came, nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he;

"The next with dirges due in sad array
Slow through the church-way path we saw him borne,
Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn."

THE EPITAPH

*Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth
A Youth to Fortune and to Fame unknown.
Fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy mark'd him for her own.*

*Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,
Heav'n did a recompense as largely send:
He gave to Mis'ry all he had, a tear,
He gain'd from Heav'n ('twas all he wish'd) a friend.*

*No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his fraillies from their dread abode.
(There they alike in trembling hope repose,)
The bosom of his Father and his God.*

THOMAS GRAY

LAMENT FOR FLODDEN

I've heard them lilting at our ewe-milking,
Lasses a-lilting before dawn o' day;
But now they are mourning on ilka green loaning:
The flowers of the forest are a' wede away.

At bughts, in the morning, nae blythe lads are scorning,
Lassies are lonely and dowie and wae;
Nae daffing, nae gabbing, but sighing and sabbing,
Ilk ane lifts her leglin and hies her away.

In hairst, at the shearing, nae youths now are jeering,
Bandsters are lyart, and runkled, and gray;
At fair or at preaching, nae wooing, nae fleeching:
The flowers of the forest are a' wede away.

At'e'en, in the gloaming, nae swankies are roaming
'Bout stacks wi' the lasses at bogle to play;
But ilk ane sits eerie, lamenting her dearie:
The flowers of the forest are a' wede away.

Dool and wae for the order sent our lads to the Border!
The English, for ance, by guile wan the day;
The flowers of the forest, that fought aye the foremost,
The prime of our land, lie cauld in the clay.

We'll hear nae mair lilting at our ewe-milking;
Women and bairns are heartless and wae;
Sighing and moaning on ilka green loaning:
The flowers of the forest are a' wede away.

JANE ELLIOT

Bughts] *sheepfolds*. Dowie] *low-spirited*. Wede] *weeded*. Leglin] *milk-pail*. Hairst] *harvest*. Bandsters] *binders*. Lyart] *grizzled*. Fleeching] *cousing*. Swankies] *lusty lads*. Bogle] *hide-and-seek*. Dool] *mourning*.

Mourning

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LAMENT FOR FLODDEN

I'VE heard them liltin' at our ewe-milkin',
Lasses a-liltin' before dawn o' day;
But now they are moaning on ilka green loanin':
The flowers of the forest are a' wede away.

At bughts, in the morning, nae blythe lads are scorning,
Lassies are lonely and dowie and wae;
Nae daffin', nae gabbin', but sighin' and sabbin',
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Mourning

FEAR NO MORE

FEAR no more the heat o' the sun,
Nor the furious winter's rages;
Thou thy worldly task hast done,
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages;
Golden lads and girls all must,
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.

Fear no more the frown o' the great,
Thou art past the tyrant's stroke:
Care no more to clothe and eat;
To thee the reed is as the oak;
The scepter, learning, physic, must
All follow this, and come to dust.

Fear no more the lightning-flash,
Nor the all-dreaded thunder-stone;
Fear not slander, censure rash;
Thou hast finish'd joy and moan:
All lovers young, all lovers must
Consign to thee, and come to dust.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

FULL FATHOM FIVE THY FATHER LIES

FULL fathom five thy father lies;
Of his bones are coral made:
Those are pearls that were his eyes:
Nothing of him that doth fade,
But doth suffer a sea-change

Mourning

Into something rich and strange.
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell:
[*Burden:* ding-dong,
Hark! now I hear them,—ding-dong, bell.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

CONCORD HYMN

*Sung at the Completion of the Concord Monument,
April 19, 1836.*

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
And Time the ruined bridge has swept
Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,
We set to-day a votive stone;
That memory may their deed redeem,
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit, that made those heroes dare
To die, or leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and thee.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS

ONE more Unfortunate
Weary of breath
Rashly importunate,
Gone to her death!
Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care;
Fashion'd so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!
Look at her garments
Clinging like cerements;
Whilst the wave constantly
Drips from her clothing;
Take her up instantly,
Loving, not loathing.
Touch her not scornfully,
Think of her mournfully,
Gently and humanly;
Not of the stains of her—
All that remains of her
Now is pure womanly.
Make no deep scrutiny
Into her mutiny
Rash and undutiful:
Past all dishonour,
Death has left on her
Only the beautiful.
Still, for all slips of hers,
One of Eve's family—
Wipe those poor lips of hers
Oozing so clammily.
Loop up her tresses
Escaped from the comb,

Mourning

Her fair auburn tresses;
Whilst wonderment guesses
Where was her home?
Who was her father?
Who was her mother?
Had she a sister?
Had she a brother?
Or was there a dearer one
Still, and a nearer one
Yet, than all other?
Alas! for the rarity
Of Christian charity
Under the sun!
O! it was pitiful!
Near a whole city full,
Home she had none.
Sisterly, brotherly,
Fatherly, motherly
Feelings had changed:
Love, by harsh evidence,
Thrown from its eminence;
Even God's providence
Seeming estranged.
Where the lamps quiver
So far in the river,
With many a light
From window and casement,
From garret to basement,
She stood with amazement,
Houseless by night.
The bleak wind of March
Made her tremble and shiver
But not the dark arch,
Or the black flowing river:
Mad from life's history,

Mourning

Glad to death's mystery
Swift to be hurl'd—
Any where, any where
Out of the world!
In she plunged boldly,
No matter how coldly
The rough river ran,—
Over the brink of it,
Picture it—think of it,
Dissolute Man!
Lave in it, drink of it,
Then, if you can!
Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care;
Fashion'd so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!
Ere her limbs frigidly
Stiffen too rigidly,
Decently, kindly,
Smooth and compose them,
And her eyes, close them,
Staring so blindly!
Dreadfully staring
Thro' muddy impurity,
As when with the daring
Last look of despairing
Fix'd on futurity.
Perishing gloomily,
Spurr'd by contumely,
Cold inhumanity,
Burning insanity,
Into her rest.
—Cross her hands humbly
As if praying dumbly,
Over her breast!

Mourning

Owning her weakness,
Her evil behaviour,
And leaving, with meekness,
Her sins to her Saviour.

THOMAS HOOD

P O E M

Written on the Eve of Execution

My prime of youth is but a frost of cares,
My feast of joy is but a dish of pain,
My crop of corn is but a field of tares,
And all my good is but vain hope of gain;
The day is past, and yet I saw no sun,
And now I live, and now my life is done.

My tale was heard and yet it was not told,
My fruit is fall'n and yet my leaves are green,
My youth is spent and yet I am not old,
I saw the world and yet I was not seen;
My thread is cut and yet it is not spun,
And now I live, and now my life is done.

I sought my death and found it in my womb,
I looked for life and saw it was a shade,
I trod the earth and knew it was my tomb,
And now I die, and now I was but made;
My glass is full, and now my glass is run,
And now I live, and now my life is done.

CHIDIACK TICHBOURNE

A NOCTURNAL UPON
SAINT LUCY'S DAY

'Tis the year's midnight, and it is the day's,
Lucy's, who scarce seven hours herself unmasks;
The sun is spent, and now his flasks
Send forth light squibs, no constant rays;
The world's whole sap is sunk;
The general balm th' hydroptic earth hath drunk,
Whither, as to the bed's feet, life is shrunk,
Dead and interred; yet all these seem to laugh,
Compared with me, who am their epitaph.

Study me then, you who shall lovers be
At the next world, that is, at the next spring;
For I am every dead thing,
In whom Love wrought new alchemy.
For his art did express
A quintessence even from nothingness,
From dull privations, and lean emptiness;
He ruined me, and I am re-begot
Of absence, darkness, death—things which are not.

All others from all things draw all that's good,
Life, soul, form, spirit, whence they being have;
I, by Love's limbec, am the grave
Of all that's nothing. Oft a flood
Have we two wept, and so
Drowned the whole world, us two; oft did we grow
To be two chaoses, when we did show
Care to aught else; and often absences
Withdrew our souls, and made us carcasses.

Mourning

But I am by her death, which word wrongs her,
Of the first nothing the elixir grown;
 Were I a man, that I were one
 I needs must know; I should prefer,
 If I were any beast,
Some ends, some means; yea plants, yea stones detest
And love; all, all some properties invest;
If I an ordinary nothing were,
As shadow, a light and body must be here.

But I am none; nor will my sun renew.
You lovers, for whose sake the lesser sun
 At this time to the Goat is run
 To fetch new lust, and give it you,
 Enjoy your summer all;
Since she enjoys her long night's festival,
Let me prepare towards her, and let me call
This hour her vigil, and her eve, since this
Both the year's and the day's deep midnight is.

JOHN DONNE

LYCIDAS

Yet once more, O ye laurels, and once more
Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,
And with forced fingers rude,
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.
Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear,
Compels me to disturb your season due:
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime

Mourning

Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer:
Who would not sing for Lycidas? he knew
Himself to sing, and build the lottly rhyme.
He must not float upon his watery bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of some melodious tear.
Begin then, Sisters of the sacred well,
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring,
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.
Hence with denial vain, and coy excuse,
So may some gentle Muse
With lucky words favour my destined urn,
And as he passes turn,
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud.
For we were nursed upon the self-same hill,
Fed the same flock, by fountain, shade, and rill.

Together both, ere the high lawns appeared
Under the opening eye-lids of the morn,
We drove afield, and both together heard
What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn,
Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
Oft till the star that rose at evening, bright
Toward heaven's descent had sloped his westerling wheel.
Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute,
Tempered to th' oaten flute,
Rough satyrs danced, and fauns with cloven heel,
From the glad sound would not be absent long,
And old Damaetas loved to hear our song.

But O the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone, and never must return!
Thee shepherd, thee the woods and desert caves,
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes mourn.
The willows, and the hazel copses green,
Shall now no more be seen,

Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.
 As killing as the canker to the rose,
 Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
 Or frost to flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear,
 When first the white thorn blows;
 Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.

Where were ye, nymphs, when the remorseless deep
 Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas?
 For neither were ye playing on the steep,
 Where your old bards, the famous Druids lie,
 Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,
 Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream:
 Ay me, I fondly dream!
 Had ye been there—for what could that have done?
 What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,
 The Muse herself, for her enchanting son
 Whom universal Nature did lament,
 When by the rout that made the hideous roar,
 His gory visage down the stream was sent,
 Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?

Alas! What boots it with incessant care
 To tend the homely slighted shepherd's trade,
 And strictly meditate the thankless Muse?
 Were it not better done as others use,
 To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
 Or with the tangles of Neera's hair?
 Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
 (That last infirmity of noble mind)
 To scorn delights, and live laborious days;
 But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
 And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
 Comes the blind Fury with th' abhorréd shears,
 And slits the thin spun life. But not the praise,
 Phoebus replied, and touched my trembling ears;
 Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,

Mourning

Nor in the glistening foil
Set off to th' world, nor in broad rumour lies,
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes,
And perfect witness of all judging Jove;
As He pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in Heav'n expect thy meed.

O fountain Arethuse, and thou honoured flood,
Smooth-sliding Mincius, crowned with vocal reeds,
That strain I heard was of a higher mood:
But now my oat proceeds,
And listens to the herald of the sea,
That came in Neptune's plea.
He asked the waves, and asked the felon winds,
What hard mishap hath doomed this gentle swain?
And questioned every gust of rugged wings
That blows from off each beaked promontory,
They knew not of his story,
And sage Hippotades their answer brings,
That not a blast was from his dungeon strayed,
The air was calm, and on the level brine
Sleek Panope with all her sisters played.
It was that fatal and perfidious bark
Built in th' eclipse, and rigged with curses dark,
That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.

Next Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,
His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,
Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge
Like to that sanguine flower inscribed with woe.
Ah! Who hath reft (quoth he) my dearest pledge?
Last came, and last did go,
The pilot of the Galilean lake,
Two massy keys he bore of metals twain,
(The golden opes, the iron shuts amain)
He shook his mitred locks, and stern bespake:
How well could I have spared for thee, young swain,

Enow of such as for their belly's sake
Creep and intrude, and climb into the fold?
Of other care they little reckoning make,
Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast,
And shove away the worthy bidden guest.
Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold
A sheep-hook, or have learned aught else the least
That to the faithful herdman's art belongs!
What recks it them? What need they? They are sped;
And when they list, their lean and flashy songs
Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw.
The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
But swoll'n with wind, and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread:
Beside what the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing said,
But that two-handed engine at the door,
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more.

Return, Alpheus, the dread voice is past,
That shrunk thy streams; return, Sicilian Muse,
And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
Their bells and flow'rets of a thousand hues.
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
Of shades and wanton winds and gushing brooks,
On whose fresh lap the swart star sparely looks,
Throw hither all your quaint enameled eyes,
That on the green turf suck the honied flowers,
And purple all the ground with vernal showers.
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansy freaked with jet,
The glowing violet,
The musk-rose, and the well-attired woodbine,
The cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears:

Mourning

Bid Amaranthus all his beauty shed,
And daffadillies fill their cups with tears,
To strow the laureate hearse where Lycid lies.
For so to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise.
Ay me! Whilst thee the shores and sounding seas
Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurled,
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide
Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world;
Or whether thou to our moist vows denied,
Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,
Where the great vision of the guarded mount
Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold;
Look homeward Angel now, and melt with ruth,
And, O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth.
Weep no more, woeful shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas your sorrow is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor,
So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky:
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
Through the dear might of him that walked the waves,
Where other groves, and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the saints above,
In solemn troops, and sweet societies
That sing, and singing in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
Now Lycidas the shepherds weep no more;
Henceforth thou art the genius of the shore,

220

Intimations of immortality

In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.

Thus sang the uncouth swain to th' oaks and rills.
While the still morn went out with sandals gray,
He touched the tender stops of various quills,
With eager thought warbling his Doric lay:
And now the sun had stretched out all the hills,
And now was dropped into the western bay;
At last he rose, and twitched his mantle blue:
To morrow to fresh woods, and pastures new.

JOHN MILTON

ODE

INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOLLECTIONS
OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

*The Child is father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.*

I

THERE was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem

Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore;—

Turn wheresoe'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

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By night or day,

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Intimations of immortality

II

The Rainbow comes and goes,
And lovely is the Rose,
The Moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare,
Waters on a starry night
Are beautiful and fair;
The sunshine is a glorious birth;
But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath past away a glory from the earth.

III

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
And while the young lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound,
To me alone there came a thought of grief:
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
And I again am strong:
The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep;
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong;
I hear the Echoes through the mountains throng,
The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep,
And all the earth is gay;
Land and sea
Give themselves up to jollity,
And with the heart of May
Doth every beast keep holiday;—
Thou Child of Joy,
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy
Shepherd-boy!

Intimations of immortality

IV

Ye blessèd Creatures, I have heard the call
Ye to each other make; I see
The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;
My heart is at your festival,
My head hath its coronal,
The fullness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.
Oh evil day! if I were sullen
While Earth herself is adorning,
This sweet May-morning,
And the children are culling
On every side,
In a thousand valleys far and wide,
Fresh flowers; while the sun shines warm,
And the Babe leaps up on his mother's arm:—
I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!
—But there's a Tree, of many, one,
A single Field which I have looked upon,
Both of them speak of something that is gone:
The Pansy at my feet
Doth the same tale repeat:
Whither is fled the visionary gleam?
Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

V

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:

Intimations of immortality

Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing Boy,
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy;
The Youth, who daily farthest from the east
Must travel, still is Nature's priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the Man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

VI

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
And, even with something of a mother's mind,
And no unworthy aim,
The homely nurse doth all she can
To make her Foster-child, her inmate Man,
Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palacc whence he came.

VII

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
A six years' darling of a pigmy size!
See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,
Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
With light upon him from his father's eyes!
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
Some fragment from his dream of human life,
Shaped by himself with newly-learned art;
A wedding or a festival,
A mourning or a funeral;

Intimations of immortality

And this hath now his heart,
And unto this he frames his song:
Then will he fit his tongue
To dialogues of business, love, or strife;
But it will not be long
Ere this be thrown aside,
And with new joy and pride
The little Actor cons another part;
Filling from time to time his 'humorous stage'
With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,
That Life brings with her in her equipage;
As if his whole vocation
Were endless imitation.

VIII

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
Thy soul's immensity;
Thou best philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage, thou eye among the blind,
That, deaf and silent, read'st the Eternal Deep,
Haunted forever by the Eternal Mind,—
Mighty prophet! seer blest!
On whom those truths do rest,
Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;
Thou, over whom thy Immortality
Broods like the Day, a master o'er a slave,
A Presence which is not to be put by;
Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might
Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,
Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?
Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly freight,

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,
Forebode not any severing of our loves!
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;
I only have relinquished one delight
To live beneath your more habitual sway.
I love the Brooks which down their channels fret,
Even more than when I tripped lightly as they;
The innocent brightness of a new-born Day
Is lovely yet;
The Clouds that gather round the setting sun
Do take a sober coloring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;
Another race hath been, and other palms are won.
Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

CUCHULAIN COMFORTED

A MAN that had six mortal wounds, a man
Violent and famous, strode among the dead;
Eyes stared out of the branches and were gone.

Then certain Shrouds that muttered head to head
Came and were gone. He leant upon a tree
As though to meditate on wounds and blood.

Intimations of immortality

A Shroud that seemed to have authority
Among those bird-like things came, and let fall
A bundle of linen. Shrouds by two and three

Came creeping up because the man was still.
And thereupon that linen-carrier said:
'Your life can grow much sweeter if you will

'Obey our ancient rule and make a shroud;
Mainly because of what we only know
The rattle of those arms makes us afraid.

'We thread the needles' eyes, and all we do
All must together do.' That done, the man
Took up the nearest and began to sew.

'Now must we sing and sing the best we can,
But first you must be told our character:
Convicted cowards all, by kindred slain

'Or driven from home and left to die in fear.'
They sang, but had nor human tunes nor words,
Though all was done in common as before;

They had changed their throats and had the throats of
birds.

W. B. YEATS

January 13, 1939

Intimations of immortality

AS SOMETIMES IN
A DEAD MAN'S FACE

As sometimes in a dead man's face,
To those that watch it more and more,
A likeness, hardly seen before,
Comes out—to someone of his race;

So, dearest, now thy brows are cold,
I see thee what thou art, and know
Thy likeness to the wise below,
Thy kindred with the great of old.

But there is more than I can see,
And what I see I leave unsaid,
Nor speak it, knowing Death has made
His darkness beautiful with thee.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

A SLUMBER DID MY SPIRIT SEAL

A SLUMBER did my spirit seal;
I had no human fears:
She seemed a thing that could not feel
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force;
She neither hears nor sees,
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

ON HIS DECEASED WIFE

METHOUGHT I saw my late espoused Saint
Brought to me like Alcestis from the grave,
Whom Jove's great Son to her glad Husband gave,
Rescued from death by force though pale and faint,
Mine as whom washed from spot of child-bed taint,
Purification in the old Law did save,
And such, as yet once more I trust to have
Full sight of her in Heaven without restraint,
Came vested all in white, pure as her mind:
Her face was veiled, yet to my fancied sight,
Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person shined
So clear, as in no face with more delight.
But O as to embrace me she inclined
I waked, she fled, and day brought back my night.

JOHN MILTON

Dear Be Not Proud
POOR SOUL

Poor soul, the center of my sinful earth,
Thrall to these rebel powers that thee array,
Why dost thou pine within and suffer dearth,
Painting thy outward walls so costly gay?
Why so large cost, having so short a lease,
Dost thou upon thy fading mansion spend?
Shall worms, inheritors of this excess,
Eat up thy charge? Is this thy body's end?
Then, soul, live thou upon thy servant's loss,
And let that pine to aggravate thy store;

Intimations of immortality

Buy terms divine in selling hours of dross;
Within be fed, without be rich no more.
So shalt thou feed on Death, that feeds on men,
And Death once dead, there's no more dying then.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

THEY ARE ALL GONE
INTO THE WORLD OF LIGHT

THEY are all gone into the world of light!
And I alone sit ling'ring here;
Their very memory is fair and bright,
And my sad thoughts doth clear.

It glows and glitters in my cloudy breast,
Like stars upon some gloomy grove,
Or those faint beams in which this hill is dress'd,
After the sun's remove.

I see them walking in an air of glory,
Whose light doth trample on my days:
My days, which are at best but dull and hoary,
Mere glimmering and decays.

O holy Hope! and high Humility,
High as the heavens above!
These are your walks, and you have show'd them me,
To kindle my cold love.

Dear, beauteous Death! the jewel of the just,
Shining nowhere, but in the dark;

Intimations of immortality

What mysteries do lie beyond thy dust,
Could man outlook that mark!

He that hath found some fledg'd bird's nest, may know
At first sight, if the bird be flown;
But what fair well or grove he sings in now,
That is to him unknown.

And yet, as angels in some brighter dreams
Call to the soul when man doth sleep,
So some strange thoughts transcend our wonted themes,
And into glory peep.

If a star were confin'd into a tomb,
Her captive flames must needs burn there;
But when the hand that lock'd her up gives room,
She'll shine through all the sphere.

O Father of eternal life, and all
Created glories under Thee!
Resume Thy spirit from this world of thrall
Into true liberty.

Either disperse these mists, which blot and fill
My perspective still as they pass:
Or else remove me hence unto that hill
Where I shall need no glass.

HENRY VAUGHAN

WHISPERS OF IMMORTALITY

WEBSTER was much possessed by death
And saw the skull beneath the skin;
And breastless creatures under ground
Leaned backward with a lipless grin.

Daffodil bulbs instead of balls
Stared from the sockets of the eyes!
He knew that thought clings round dead limbs
Tightening its lusts and luxuries.

Donne, I suppose, was such another
Who found no substitute for sense,
To seize and clutch and penetrate;
Expert beyond experience,

He knew the anguish of the marrow
The ache of the skeleton;
No contact possible to flesh
Allayed the fever of the bone.

Grishkin is nice: her Russian eye
Is underlined for emphasis;
Uncorseted, her friendly bust
Gives promise of pneumatic bliss.

The couched Brazilian jaguar
Compels the scampering marmoset
With subtle effluence of cat;
Grishkin has a maisonette;

The sleek Brazilian jaguar
Does not in its arboreal gloom

Intimations of immortality

Distil so rank a feline smell
As Grishkin in a drawing-room.

And even the Abstract Entities
Circumambulate her charm;
But our lot crawls between dry ribs
To keep our metaphysics warm.

T. S. ELIOT

ON SOME SHELLS
FOUND INLAND

THESE are my murmur-laden shells that keep
A fresh voice tho' the years lie very gray.
The wave that washed their lips and tuned their lay
Is gone, gone with the faded ocean sweep,
The royal tide, gray ebb and sunken neap
And purple midday,—gone! To this hot clay
Must sing my shells, where yet the primal day,
Its roar and rhythm and splendour will not sleep.

What hand shall join them to their proper sea
If all be gone? Shall they forever feel
Glories undone and worlds that cannot be?—
'Twere mercy to stamp out this aged wrong,
Dash them to earth and crunch them with the heel
And make a dust of their seraphic song.

TRUMBULL STICKNEY
235

TO LUCASTA, ON GOING
BEYOND THE SEAS

If to be absent were to be
 Away from thee;
 Or that when I am gone
 You or I were alone;
Then, my Lucasta, might I crave
Pity from blustering wind, or swallowing wave.

Though seas and land betwixt us both,
 Our faith and troth,
 Like separated souls,
 All time and space controls:
Above the highest sphere we meet
Unseen, unknown, and greet as Angels greet.

So then we do anticipate
 Our after-fate,
 And are alive i' the skies,
 If thus our lips and eyes
 Can speak like spirits unconfin'd
In Heaven, their earthy bodies left behind.

RICHARD LOVELACE

P.

A NOISELESS PATIENT SPIDER

A NOISELESS patient spider,
I mark'd where on a little promontory it stood isolated,
Mark'd how to explore the vacant vast surrounding,
236

Intimations of immortality

It launch'd forth filament, filament, filament, out of itself.
Ever unreeling them, ever tirelessly speeding them.

And you O my soul where you stand,
Surrounded, detached, in measureless oceans of space,
Ceaselessly musing, venturing, throwing, seeking the
spheres to connect them.
Till the bridge you will need be form'd, till the ductile
anchor hold,
Till the gossamer thread you fling catch somewhere, O
my soul.

WALT WHITMAN

I HELD IT TRUTH

I HELD it truth, with him who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.

But who shall so forecast the years
And find in loss a gain to match?
Or reach a hand thro' time to catch
The far-off interest of tears?

Let Love clasp Grief lest both be drown'd,
Let darkness keep her raven gloss:

Vision and prayer

Ah, sweeter to be drunk with loss,
To dance with death, to beat the ground,

Than that the victor Hours should scorn
The long result of love, and boast:
"Behold the man that loved and lost,
But all he was is overworn."

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

VISION AND PRAYER

[I]

Who
Are you
Who is born
In the next room
So loud to my own
That I can hear the womb
Opening and the dark run
Over the ghost and the dropped son
Behind the wall thin as a wren's bone?
In the birth bloody room unknown
To the burn and turn of time
And the heart print of man
Bows no baptism
But dark alone
Blessing on
The wild
Child.

I
Must lie
Still as stone
By the wren bone
Wall hearing the moan
Of the mother hidden
And the shadowed head of pain
Casting tomorrow like a thorn
And the midwives of miracle sing
Until the turbulent new born
Burns me his name and his flame
And the winged wall is torn
By his torrid crown
And the dark thrown
From his loin
To bright
Light.

When
The wren
Bonewrithes down
And the first dawn
Furied by his stream
Swarms on the kingdom come
Of the dazzler of heaven
And the splashed mothering maiden
Who bore him with a bonfire in
His mouth and rocked him like a storm
I shall run lost in sudden
Terror and shining from
The once hooded room
Crying in vain
In the caldron
Of his
Kiss

Vision and prayer

 I n
 The spin
 Of the sun
 In the spuming
 Cyclone of his wing
 For I was lost who am
 Crying at the man-drenched throne
 In the first fury of his stream
And the lightnings of adoration
 Back to black silence melt and mourn
 For I was lost who have come
 To dumbfounding haven
 And the finding one
 And the high noon
 Of his wound
 Blinds my
 Cry.

 There
 Crouched bare
 In the shrine
 Of his blazing
 Breast I shall waken
 To the judge blown bedlam
 Of the uncaged sea bottom
The cloud climb of the exhaling tomb
 And the bidden dust upsailing
 With his flame in every grain.
 O spiral of ascension
 From the vultured urn
 Of the morning
 Of man when
 The land
 And

Vision and prayer

The
Born sea
Praised the sun
The finding one
And upright Adam
Sang upon origin!
O the wings of the children!
The woundward flight of the ancient
Young from the canyons of oblivion!
The sky stride of the always slain
In battle! the happening
Of saints to their vision!
The world winding home!
And the whole pain
Flows open
A n d I
Die.

[11] In the name of the lost who glory in
The swinish plains of carrion
Under the burial song
Of the birds of burden
Heavy with the drowned
And the green dust
And bearing
The ghost
From
The ground
Like pollen
On the black plume
And the beak of slime
I pray though I belong
Not wholly to that lamenting
Brethren for joy has moved within
The inmost marrow of my heart bone

Vision and prayer

That he who learns now the sun and moon
Of his mother's milk may return
Before the lips blaze and bloom
To the birth bloody room
Behind the wall's wren
Bone and be dumb
And the womb
That bore
For
All men
The adored
Infant light or
The dazzling prison
Yawn to his upcoming.
In the name of the wanton
Lost on the unchristened mountain
In the centre of dark I pray him

That he let the dead lie though they moan
For his briared hands to hoist them
To the shrine of his world's wound
And the blood drop's garden
Endure the stone
Blind host to sleep
In the dark
And deep
Rock
A w a k e
No heart bone
But let it break
On the mountain crown
Unsummoned by the sun
And the beating dust be blown
Down to the river rooting plain
Under the night forever falling.

Vision and prayer

Forever falling night is a known
Star and country to the legion
Of sleepers whose tongue I toll
To mourn his deluging
Light through sea and soil
And we have come
To know all
Places
Ways
Mazes
Passages
Quarters and graves
Of the endless fall.
Now common lazarus
Of the charting sleepers prays
Never to awake and arise
For the country of death is the heart's size
And the star of the lost the shape of the eyes.
In the name of the fatherless
In the name of the unborn
And the undesirers
Of midwiving morning's
Hands or instruments
O in the name
Of no one
Now or
No
One to
Be I pray
May the crimson
Sun spin a grave grey
And the colour of clay
Stream upon his martyrdom
In the interpreted evening
And the known dark of the earth amen.

Vision and prayer

I turn the corner of prayer and burn
In a blessing of the sudden
Sun. In the name of the damned
I would turn back and run
To the hidden land
But the loud sun
Christens down
The sky.
I
Am found.
O let him
Scald me and drown
Me in his world's wound.
His lightning answers my
Cry. My voice burns in his hand.
Now I am lost in the blinding
One. The sun roars at the prayer's end.

DYLAN THOMAS

from THE CITY OF DREADFUL NIGHT

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: All was black,
In heaven no single star, on earth no track;
A brooding hush without a stir or note,
The air so thick it clotted in my throat;
And thus for hours; then some enormous things
Swooped past with savage cries and clanking wings:
But I strode on austere;
No hope could have no fear.

Vision and prayer

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: Eyes of fire
Glared at me throbbing with a starved desire;
The hoarse and heavy and carnivorous breath
Was hot upon me from deep jaws of death;
Sharp claws, swift talons, fleshless fingers cold
Plucked at me from the bushes, tried to hold:
But I strode on austere;
No hope could have no fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: Lo you, there,
That hillock burning with a brazen glare;
Those myriad dusky flames with points a-glow
Which writhed and hissed and darted to and fro;
A Sabbath of the Serpents, heaped pell-mell
For Devil's roll-call and some *fête* of hell:
Yet I strode on austere;
No hope could have no fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: Meteors ran
And crossed their javelins on the black sky-span;
The zenith opened to a gulf of flame,
The dreadful thunderbolts jarred earth's fixed frame;
The ground all heaved in waves of fire that surged
And weltered round me sole there unsubmerged:
Yet I strode on austere;
No hope could have no fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: Air once more,
And I was close upon a wild sea-shore;
Enormous cliffs arose on either hand,
The deep tide thundered up a league-broad strand;

Vision and prayer

White foambelts seethed there, wan spray swept and
flew;
The sky broke, moon and stars and clouds and blue;
And I strode on austere;
No hope could have no fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: On the left
The sun arose and crowned a broad crag-cleft;
There stopped and burned out black, except a rim,
A bleeding, eyeless socket, red and dim;
Whereon the moon fell suddenly south-west,
And stood above the right-hand cliffs at rest:
Still I strode on austere;
No hope could have no fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: From the right
A shape came slowly with a ruddy light;
A woman with a red lamp in her hand,
Bareheaded and barefooted on that strand;
O desolation moving with such grace!
O anguish with such beauty in thy face!
I tell as on my bier,
I hope travailed with such fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: I was twain,
Two selves distinct that cannot join again;
One stood apart and knew but could not stir,
And watched the other stark in swoon and her;
And she came on, and never turned aside,
Between such sun and moon and roaring tide:
And as she came more near
My soul grew mad with fear.

Vision and prayer

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: Hell is mild
And piteous matched with that accursèd wild;
A large black sign was on her breast that bowed,
A broad black band ran down her snow-white shroud;
That lamp she held was her own burning heart,
Whose blood-drops trickled step by step apart:
 The mystery was clear;
 Mad rage had swallowed fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: By the sea
She knelt and bent above that senseless me;
Those lamp-drops fell upon my white brow there,
She tried to cleanse them with her tears and hair;
She murmured words of pity, love, and woe,
She heeded not the level rushing flow:
 And mad with rage and fear,
 I stood stonebound so near.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: When the tide
Swept up to her there kneeling by my side,
She clasped that corpse-like me, and they were borne
Away, and this vile me was left forlorn;
I know the whole sea cannot quench that heart,
Or cleanse that brow, or wash those two apart:
 They love; their doom is drear,
 Yet they nor hope nor fear;
 But I, what do I here?

JAMES THOMSON

Vision and prayer

A PRAYER FOR MY
DAUGHTER

ONCE more the storm is howling, and half hid
Under this cradle-hood and coverlid
My child sleeps on. There is no obstacle
But Gregory's wood and one bare hill
Whereby the haystack- and roof-levelling wind,
Bred on the Atlantic, can be stayed;
And for an hour I have walked and prayed
Because of the great gloom that is in my mind.

I have walked and prayed for this young child an hour
And heard the sea-wind scream upon the tower,
And under the arches of the bridge, and scream
In the elms above the flooded stream;
Imagining in excited reverie
That the future years had come,
Dancing to a frenzied drum,
Out of the murderous innocence of the sea.

May she be granted beauty and yet not
Beauty to make a stranger's eye distraught,
Or hers before a looking-glass, for such,
Being made beautiful overmuch,
Consider beauty a sufficient end,
Lose natural kindness and maybe
The heart-revealing intimacy
That chooses right, and never find a friend.

Helen being chosen found life flat and dull
And later had much trouble from a fool,

Vision and prayer

While that great Queen, that rose out of the spray,
Being fatherless could have her way
Yet chose a bandy-legged smith for man.
It's certain that fine women eat
A crazy salad with their meat
Whereby the Horn of Plenty is undone.

In courtesy I'd have her chiefly learned;
Hearts are not had as a gift but hearts are earned
By those that are not entirely beautiful;
Yet many, that have played the fool
For beauty's very self, has charm made wise,
And many a poor man that has roved,
Loved and thought himself beloved,
From a glad kindness cannot take his eyes.

May she become a flourishing hidden tree
That all her thoughts may like the linnet be,
And have no business but dispensing round
Their magnanimities of sound,
Nor but in merriment begin a chase,
Nor but in merriment a quarrel.
O may she live like some green laurel
Rooted in one dear perpetual place.

My mind, because the minds that I have loved,
The sort of beauty that I have approved,
Prosper but little, has dried up of late,
Yet knows that to be choked with hate
May well be of all evil chances chief.
If there's no hatred in a mind
Assault and battery of the wind
Can never tear the linnet from the leaf.

Vision and prayer

An intellectual hatred is the worst,
So let her think opinions are accursed.
Have I not seen the loveliest woman born
Out of the mouth of Plenty's horn,
Because of her opinionated mind
Barter that horn and every good
By quiet natures understood
For an old bellows full of angry wind?

Considering that, all hatred driven hence,
The soul recovers radical innocence
And learns at last that it is self-delighting,
Self-appeasing, self-affrighting,
And that its own sweet will is Heaven's will;
She can, though every face should scowl
And every windy quarter howl
Or every bellows burst, be happy still.

And may her bridegroom bring her to a house
Where all's accustomed, ceremonious;
For arrogance and hatred are the wares
Peddled in the thoroughfares.
How but in custom and in ceremony
Are innocence and beauty born?
Ceremony's a name for the rich horn,
And custom for the spreading laurel tree.

W. B. YEATS

June 1919.

PRELUDES TO ATTITUDE

I

Two coffees in the Español, the last
Bright drops of golden Barsac in a goblet,
Fig paste and candied nuts. . . . Hardy is dead,
And James and Conrad dead, and Shakespeare dead,
And old Moore ripens for an obscene grave,
And Yeats for an arid one; and I, and you—
What winding sheet for us, what boards and bricks,
What mummeries, candles, prayers, and pious frauds?
You shall be lapped in Syrian scarlet, woman,
And wear your pearls, and your bright bracelets, too,
Your agate ring, and round your neck shall hang
Your dark blue lapis with its specks of gold.
And I, beside you—ah! but will that be?
For there are dark streams in this dark world, lady,
Gulf Streams and Arctic currents of the soul;
And I may be, before our consummation
Beds us together, cheek by jowl, in earth,
Swept to another shore, where my white bones
Will lie unhonored, or defiled by gulls.

What dignity can death bestow on us,
Who kiss beneath a streetlamp, or hold hands
Half hidden in a taxi or replete
With coffee, figs and Barsac make our way
To a dark bedroom in a wormworn house?
The aspidistra guards the door; we enter,
Per aspidistra—then ad astra—is it?—
And lock ourselves securely in our gloom
And loose ourselves from terror. . . . Here's my hand,
The white scar on my thumb, and here's my mouth

Vision and prayer

Water and earth and air and the sun's fire?
Or else, a question simply?—

—Water and fire were there,
And air and earth; there too was emptiness;
All, and nothing, and something too, and love.
But these poor words, these squeaks of ours, in which
We strive to mimic, with strained throats and tongues,
The spawning and outrageous elements—
Alas, how paltry are they! For I saw—
—What did you see?

—I saw myself and God.
I saw the ruin in which godhead lives:
Shapeless and vast: the strewn wreck of the world:
Sadness unplumbed: misery without bound.
Wailing I heard, but also I heard joy.
Wreckage I saw, but also I saw flowers.
Hatred I saw, but also I saw love. . . .
And thus, I saw myself.

—And this alone?

—And this alone awaits you, when you dare
To that sheer verge where horror hangs, and tremble
Against the falling rock; and, looking down,
Search the dark kingdom. It is to self you come,—
And that is God. It is the seed of seeds:
Seed for disastrous and immortal worlds.

It is the answer that no question asked.

CONRAD AIKEN

IN TIME OF PESTILENCE

ADIEU, farewell earth's bliss,
This world uncertain is;
Fond are life's lustful joys,
Death proves them all but toys,
None from his darts can fly.
I am sick, I must die.
Lord, have mercy on us!

Rich men, trust not in wealth,
Gold cannot buy you health;
Physic himself must fade,
All things to end are made,
The plague full swift goes by;
I am sick, I must die.
Lord, have mercy on us!

Beauty is but a flower
Which wrinkles will devour:
Brightness falls from the air,
Queens have died young and fair,
Dust hath closed Helen's eye.
I am sick, I must die./
Lord, have mercy on us!

Strength stoops unto the grave,
Worms feed on Hector brave,
Swords may not fight with fate.
Earth still holds ope her gate;
Come! come! the bells do cry.
I am sick, I must die.
Lord, have mercy on us!

Vision and prayer

Wit with his wantonness
Tasteth death's bitterness;
Hell's executioner
Hath no ears for to hear
What vain art can reply.
I am sick, I must die.
 Lord, have mercy on us!

Haste, therefore, each degree,
To welcome destiny.
Heaven is our heritage,
Earth but a player's stage;
Mount we unto the sky.
I am sick, I must die.
 Lord, have mercy on us!

1598

THOMAS NASEC

SUNDAY MORNING

I

COMPLACENCIES of the peignoir, and late
Coffee and oranges in a sunny chair,
And the green freedom of a cockatoo
Upon a rug mingle to dissipate
The holy hush of ancient sacrifice.
She dreams a little, and she feels the dark
Encroachment of that old catastrophe,
As a calm darkens among water-lights.
The pungent oranges and bright, green wings

Vision and prayer

Seem things in some procession of the dead,
Winding across wide water, without sound.
The day is like wide water, without sound,
Stilled for the passing of her dreaming feet
Over the seas, to silent Palestine,
Dominion of the blood and sepulchre.

II

Why should she give her bounty to the dead?
What is divinity if it can come
Only in silent shadows and in dreams?
Shall she not find in comforts of the sun,
In pungent fruit and bright, green wings, or else
In any balm or beauty of the earth,
Things to be cherished like the thought of heaven?
Divinity must live within herself:
Passions of rain, or moods in falling snow;
Grievings in loneliness, or unsubdued
Elations when the forest blooms; gusty
Emotions on wet roads on autumn nights;
All pleasures and all pains, remembering
The bough of summer and the winter branch.
These are the measures destined for her soul.

III

Jove in the clouds had his inhuman birth.
No mother suckled him, no sweet land gave
Large-mannered motions to his mythy mind.
He moved among us, as a muttering king,

Vision and prayer

Magnificent, would move among his hinds,
Until our blood, commingling, virginal,
With heaven, brought such requital to desire
The very hinds discerned it, in a star.
Shall our blood fail? Or shall it come to be
The blood of paradise? And shall the earth
Seem all of paradise that we shall know?
The sky will be much friendlier then than now,
A part of labor and a part of pain,
And next in glory to enduring love,
Not this dividing and indifferent blue.

IV

She says, "I am content when wakened birds,
Before they fly, test the reality
Of misty fields, by their sweet questionings;
But when the birds are gone, and their warm fields
Return no more, where, then, is paradise?"
There is not any haunt of prophecy,
Nor any old chimera of the grave,
Neither the golden underground, nor isle
Melodious, where spirits gat them home,
Nor visionary south, nor cloudy palm
Remote on heaven's hill, that has endured
As April's green endures; or will endure
Like her remembrance of awakened birds,
Or her desire for June and evening, tipped
By the consummation of the swallow's wings.

V

She says, "But in contentment I still feel
The need of some imperishable bliss."
Death is the mother of beauty; hence from her,
Alone, shall come fulfilment to our dreams
And our desires. Although she strews the leaves
Of sure obliteration on our paths,
The path sick sorrow took, the many paths
Where triumph rang its brassy phrase, or love
Whispered a little out of tenderness,
She makes the willow shiver in the sun
For maidens who were wont to sit and gaze
Upon the grass, relinquished to their feet.
She causes boys to pile new plums and pears
On disregarded plate. The maidens taste
And stray impassioned in the littering leaves.

VI

Is there no change of death in paradise?
Does ripe fruit never fall? Or do the boughs
Hang always heavy in that perfect sky,
Unchanging, yet so like our perishing earth,
With rivers like our own that seek for seas
They never find, the same receding shores
That never touch with inarticulate pang?
Why set the pear upon those river-banks
Or spice the shores with odors of the plum?
Alas, that they should wear our colors there,
The silken weavings of our afternoons,
And pick the strings of our insipid lutes!

Vision and prayer

Death is the mother of beauty, mystical,
Within whose burning bosom we devise
Our earthly mothers waiting, sleeplessly.

VII

Supple and turbulent, a ring of men
Shall chant in orgy on a summer morn
Their boisterous devotion to the sun,
Not as a god, but as a god might be,
Naked among them, like a savage source.
Their chant shall be a chant of paradise,
Out of their blood, returning to the sky;
And in their chant shall enter, voice by voice,
The windy lake wherein their lord delights,
The trees, like serafim, and echoing hills,
That choir among themselves long afterward.
They shall know well the heavenly fellowship
Of men that perish and of summer morn.
And whence they came and whither they shall go
The dew upon their feet shall manifest.

VIII

She hears, upon that water without sound,
A voice that cries, "The tomb in Palestine
Is not the porch of spirits lingering.
It is the grave of Jesus, where he lay."
We live in an old chaos of the sun,
Or old dependency of day and night,
Or island solitude, unsponsored, free,
Of that wide water, inescapable.
Deer walk upon our mountains, and the quail

Vision and prayer

Whistle about us their spontaneous cries;
Sweet berries ripen in the wilderness;
And, in the isolation of the sky,
At evening, casual flocks of pigeons make
Ambiguous undulations as they sink,
Downward to darkness, on extended wings.

WALLACE STEVENS

BE NEAR ME

Be near me when my light is low,
When the blood creeps, and the nerves prick
And tingle; and the heart is sick,
And all the wheels of Being slow.

Be near me when the sensuous frame
Is rack'd with pangs that conquer trust,
And Time, a maniac, scattering dust,
And Life, a Fury, slinging flame.

Be near me when my faith is dry,
And men the flies of latter spring,
That lay their eggs and sting and sing,
And weave their petty cells and die.

Be near me when I fade away,
To point the term of human strife,
And on the low dark verge of life
The twilight of eternal day.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

THE SEESAW

I

I sit on the surge called ten stories tall
My eye flattens to a floor, a wall,
Like any bird on the nest anywhere
I live in a constant nothing of air
Some forty years up and ten stories high
A hundred inventions ahead of the sky,
With a ladder of ancestors holding me up
Whose rungs into history mystery drop,
And here I am where faith's feathers fly
Like the child in the rhyme in the sky so high.

Over the plumes of your thoughts I see
Your tired heart resting beside a tree;
From the tenth platform of my tithe of time
I perceive you exhausted in your prime,
With heaven collaterally circling around
Your presence that holds the landscape down,
With birds disappearing in the sponge of leaves
And sundown painting your hopes in sheaves—
I speak into a tube for your distant ear,
You look up at me across the miles so clear.

Is it your look makes my room to descend
As though I were inside the shaft of the end?
The floorspace edges from under my feet
The breadth of a sword's edge of monstrous speed;
I grasp for the desperate point of a tear,
For the bend in space or the turn of the year,
But out of the thousands not the least star
Can keep me from falling too fast too far;
And suddenly there beneath your tree I lie
With you at the window ten stories so high.

II

My face hung out its search in front of me,
A mask to try the outer storm of space,
Or net of form cast in the sea to be,
To catch at things not safely in their place
Out building coral pinnacles; on the fly
When heaven was stretched on rocks of cloud I caught
A tall star in the corner of my eye,—
I was lassoed, prone on the floor of thought—

Thrown, like the fisherman's wife who asked too much
In wanting to be God; the lightning's hiss
Foamed at the peak of earth, full height to touch
And hope, but death-rayed down to an abyss,
This now-deep nothingness on which we're curled.
It is the stars that make a valley of the world.

III

Divine seesaw! Rise in thine arc of higher!
The valley of the grave holds up the stars.
The hand on the Big Dipper trembles, pours
The fields of gold that roll out on the mire;
And in those fields there boils another sun
Stamping his weight until the night's stars drive
My unlied ages to the land of none
From which the sunflower shakes his flames alive—

And fire breaks out in my friend's house of rules,
The light in my neighbor's window burns my soul,
My enemy falls heir to all of Christ's jewels,
The loved one in the moving grave swings clear.
The grave and window seesaw before the whole,
The hill wears orbits of the dust and wind.
O pivot's pressure at the heart, through you I hear
The universe hallooing for an end.

OSCAR WILLIAMS

The Rubáiyát

THE RUBÁIYÁT OF
OMAR KHAYYÁM

WAKE! For the Sun, who scattered into flight
The Stars before him from the Field of Night,
Drives Night along with them from Heav'n and strikes,
The Sultán's Turret with a Shaft of Light.

Before the phantom of False morning died,
Methought a Voice within the Tavern cried,
'When all the Temple is prepared within,
Why nods the drowsy Worshiper outside?'

And, as the Cock crew, those who stood before
The Tavern shouted—'Open, then, the Door!
You know how little while we have to stay,
And, once departed, may return no more.'

Now the New Year reviving old Desires,
The thoughtful Soul to Solitude retires,
Where the WHITE HAND OF MOSES on the Bough
Puts out, and Jesus from the Ground suspires.

Iram indeed is gone with all his Rose,
And Jamshyd's Sev'n-ringed Cup where no one knows;
But still a Ruby kindles in the Vine,
And many a Garden by the Water blows.

And David's lips are locked, but in divine
High-piping Pehlevi, with 'Wine! Wine! Wine!
Red Wine!'—the Nightingale cries to the Rose
That sallow cheek of hers to incarnadine.

Come, fill the Cup, and in the fire of Spring
Your Winter-garment of Repentance fling;
The Bird of Time has but a little way
To flutter—and the Bird is on the Wing.

Whether at Naishápúr or Babylon,
Whether the Cup with sweet or bitter run,
The Wine of Life keeps oozing drop by drop,
The Leaves of Life keep falling one by one.

Each Morn a thousand Roses brings, you say;
Yes, but where leaves the Rose of Yesterday?
And this first Summer month that brings the Rose
Shall take Jamshyd and Kaikobád away.

Well, let it take them! What have we to do
With Kaikobád the Great, or Kaikhosrú?
Let Zál and Rustum bluster as they will,
Or Hátim call to Supper—heed not you.

With me along the strip of Herbage strown
That just divides the desert from the sown,
Where name of Slave and Sultán is forgot—
And Peace to Mahmúd on his golden Throne!

A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,
A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread—and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!

Some for the Glories of This World; and some
Sigh for the Prophet's Paradise to come;
Ah, take the Cash, and let the Credit go,
Nor heed the rumble of a distant Drum!

The Rubáiyát .

Look to the blowing Rose about us—'Lo,
Laughing,' she says, 'into the world I blow,
At once the silken tassel of my Purse
Tear, and its Treasure on the Garden throw.'

And those who husbanded the Golden Grain.
And those who flung it to the winds like Rain,
Alike to no such aureate Earth are turned
As, buried once, Men want dug up again.

The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon
Turns Ashes—or it prospers; and anon,
Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face,
Lighting a little hour or two—is gone.

Think, in this battered Caravanserai
Whose Portals are alternate Night and Day,
How Sultán after Sultán with his Pomp
Abode his destined Hour, and went his way.

They say the Lion and the Lizard keep
The Courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank deep;
And Bahrá'm, that great Hunter—the Wild Ass
Stamps o'er his Head, but cannot break his Sleep.

I sometimes think that never blows so red
The Rose as where some buried Cæsar bled;
That every Hyacinth the Garden wears
Dropped in her Lap from some once lovely Head.

And this reviving Herb whose tender Green
Fledges the River-Lip on which we lean—
Ah, lean upon it lightly! for who knows
From what once lovely Lip it springs unseen!

Ah, my Belovèd, fill the Cup that clears
TODAY of past Regrets and future Fears:
Tomorrow!—Why, Tomorrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n thousand Years.

For some we loved, the loveliest and the best
That from his Vintage rolling Time hath prest,
Have drunk their Cup a Round or two before,
And one by one crept silently to rest.

And we, that now make merry in the Room
They left, and Summer dresses in new bloom,
Ourselves must we beneath the Couch of Earth
Descend—ourselves to make a Couch—for whom?

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before we too into the Dust descend;
Dust into Dust, and under Dust, to lie,
Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and—sans End!

Alike for those who for TODAY prepare,
And those that after some TOMORROW stare,
A Muezzin from the Tower of Darkness cries,
'Fools, your Reward is neither Here nor There.'

Why, all the Saints and Sages who discussed
Of the Two Worlds so wisely—they are thrust
Like foolish Prophets forth; their Words to Scorn
Are scattered, and their Mouths are stopped with Dust.

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and Saint, and heard great argument
About it and about; but evermore
Came out by the same door where in I went.

The Rubāiyāt •

With them the seed of Wisdom did I sow,
And with mine own hand wrought to make it grow;
And this was all the Harvest that I reaped—
'I came like Water, and like Wind I go.'

Into this Universe, and *Why* not knowing
Nor *Whence*, like Water willy-nilly flowing;
And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
I know not *Whither*, willy-nilly blowing.

What, without asking, hither hurried *Whence*?
And, without asking, *Whither* hurried hence!
Oh, many a Cup of this forbidden Wine
Must drown the memory of that insolence!

Up from the Earth's Center through the Seventh Gate
I rose, and on the Throne of Saturn sate,
And many a Knot unraveled by the Road;
But not the Master-knot of Human Fate.

There was the Door to which I found no Key;
There was the Veil through which I might not see;
Some little talk awhile of ME and THEE
There was—and then no more of THEE and ME.

Earth could not answer; nor the Seas that mourn
In flowing Purple, of their Lord forlorn;
Nor rolling Heaven, with all his Signs reveal'd
And hidden by the sleeve of Night and Morn.

Then of the THEE IN ME who works behind
The Veil, I lifted up my hands to find
A Lamp amid the Darkness; and I heard,
As from Without—"THE ME WITHIN THEE BLIND!"

The Rubáiyát

Then to the Lip of this poor earthen Urn
I leaned, the Secret of my Life to learn;
And Lip to Lip it murmured—'While you live,
Drink!—for, once dead, you never shall return.'

I think the Vessel, that with fugitive
Articulation answered, once did live,
And drink; and Ah! the passive Lip I kissed,
How many Kisses might it take—and give!

For I remember stopping by the way
To watch a Potter thumping his wet Clay;
And with its all-obliterated Tongue
It murmured—'Gently, Brother, gently, pray!'

And has not such a Story from of Old
Down Man's successive generations rolled
Of such a clod of saturated Earth
Cast by the Maker into Human mold?

And not a drop that from our Cups we throw
For Earth to drink of, but may steal below
To quench the fire of Anguish in some Eye
There hidden—far beneath, and long ago.

As then the Tulip, for her morning sup
Of Heav'nly Vintage, from the soil looks up,
Do you devoutly do the like, till Heav'n
To Earth invert you—like an empty Cup.

Perplexed no more with Human or Divine,
Tomorrow's tangle to the winds resign,
And lose your fingers in the tresses of
The Cypress-slender Minister of Wine.

The Rubāiyāt •

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The Rubáiyát

And if the Wine you drink, the Lip you press,
End in what All begins and ends in—Yes;

Think that you are TODAY what YESTERDAY
You were—TOMORROW you shall not be less.

So when that Angel of the darker Drink
At last shall find you by the river-brink,
And offering his Cup, invite your Soul
Forth to your Lips to quaff—you shall not shrink.

Why, if the Soul can fling the Dust aside,
And naked on the Air of Heaven ride,
Were 't not a Shame—were 't not a Shame for him
In this clay carcass crippled to abide?

'Tis but a Tent where takes his one day's rest
A Sultán to the realm of Death address;
The Sultán rises, and the dark Ferrásh
Strikes, and prepares it for another Guest.

And fear not lest Existence closing your
Account, and mine, should know the like no more;
The Eternal Sáki from that Bowl has poured
Millions of Bubbles like us, and will pour.

When You and I behind the Veil are past,
Oh, but the long, long while the World shall last,
Which of our Coming and Departure heeds
As the Sea's self should heed a pebble-cast.

A Moment's Halt—a momentary taste
Of BEING from the Well amid the Waste—
And Lo!—the phantom Caravan has reached
The NOTHING it set out from—Oh, make haste!

The Rubáiyát

Would you that spangle of Existence spend
About THE SECRET—quick about it, Friend!

A Hair perhaps divides the False and True—
And upon what, prithee, does life depend?

A Hair perhaps divides the False and True—
Yes; and a single Alif were the clue—

Could you but find it—to the Treasure-house,
And peradventure to THE MASTER too;

Whose secret Presence, through Creation's veins
Running Quicksilver-like, eludes your pains;

Taking all shapes from Máh to Máhi; and
They change and perish all—but He remains;

A moment guessed—then back behind the Fold
Immersed of Darkness round the Drama rolled

Which, for the Pastime of Eternity,
He doth Himself contrive, enact, behold.

But if in vain, down on the stubborn floor
Of Earth, and up to Heav'n's unopening Door,

You gaze TODAY, while You are You—how then
TOMORROW, when You shall be You no more?

Waste not your Hour, nor in the vain pursuit
Of This and That endeavor and dispute;

Better be jocund with the fruitful Grape
Than sadden after none, or bitter, Fruit.

You know, my Friends, with what a brave Carouse
I made a Second Marriage in my house;

Divorced old barren Reason from my Bed,
And took the Daughter of the Vine to Spouse.

The Rubáiyát

For 'Is' and 'Is-NOT' though with Rule and Line,
And 'UP-AND-DOWN' by Logic, I define,
Of all that one should care to fathom, I
Was never deep in anything but—Wine.

Ah, but my Computations, People say,
Reduced the Year to better reckoning?—Nay,
'Twas only striking from the Calendar
Unborn Tomorrow, and dead Yesterday.

And lately, by the Tavern Door agape,
Came shining through the Dusk an Angel Shape
Bearing a Vessel on his Shoulder; and
He bid me taste of it; and 'twas—the Grapel

The Grape that can with Logic absolute
The Two-and-Seventy jarring Sects confute;
The sovereign Alchemist that in a trice
Life's leaden metal into Gold transmute;

The mighty Mahmúd, Allah-breathing Lord,
That all the misbelieving and black Horde
Of fears and Sorrows that infest the Soul
Scatters before him with his whirlwind Sword.

Why, be this Juice the growth of God, who dare
Blaspheme the twisted tendril as a Snare?
A Blessing, we should use it, should we not?
And if a Curse—why, then, Who set it there?

I must abjure the Balm of Life, I must,
Scared by some After-reckoning ta'en on trust
Or lured with Ilope of some Diviner Drink,
To fill the Cup—when crumbled into Dust!

The Rubáiyát

Oh threats of Hell and Hopes of Paradise!
One thing at least is certain—*This* Life flies;
One thing is certain and the rest is Lies—
The Flower that once has blown forever dies.

Strange, is it not? that of the myriads who
Before us passed the door of Darkness through,
Not one returns to tell us of the Road,
Which to discover we must travel too.

The Revelations of Devout and Learned
Who rose before us, and as Prophets burned,
Are all but Storics, which, awoke from Sleep,
They told their comrades, and to Sleep returned.

I sent my Soul through the Invisible,
Some letter of that After-life to spell;
And by and by my Soul returned to me,
And answered, 'I Myself am Heav'n and Hell'—

Heav'n but the Vision of fulfilled Desire,
And Hell the Shadow from a Soul on fire
Cast on the Darkness into which Ourselves,
So late emerged from, shall so soon expire.

We are no other than a moving row
Of Magic Shadow-shapes that come and go
Round with the Sun-illuminated Lantern held
In Midnight by the Master of the Show;

But helpless Pieces of the Game He plays
Upon this Checker-board of Nights and Days;
Hither and thither moves, and checks, and slays,
And one by one back in the Closet lays.

The Rubáiyát

The Ball no question makes of Ayes and Noes,
But Here or There as strikes the Player goes;
And He that tossed you down into the Field,
He knows about it all—*HE* knows—*HE* knows!

The Moving Finger writes, and, having writ,
Moves on; nor all your Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it.

And that inverted Bowl they call the Sky,
Whereunder crawling cooped we live and die,
Lift not your hands to *It* for help—for *It*
As impotently moves as you or I.

With Earth's first Clay They did the Last Man knead,
And there of the Last Harvest sowed the Seed;
And the first Morning of Creation wrote
What the Last Dawn of Reckoning shall read.

YESTERDAY *This* Day's Madness did prepare;
TOMORROW's Silence, Triumph, or Despair.
Drink! for you know not whence you came, nor why;
Drink, for you know not why you go, nor where.

I tell you this—When, started from the Goal,
Over the flaming shoulders of the Foal
Of Heav'n Parwin and Mushtari they flung,
In my predestined Plot of Dust and Soul

'The Vine had struck a fiber; which about
If clings my Being—let the Dervish flout;
Of my Base metal may be filed a Key,
That shall unlock the Door he howls without.

274

The Rubáyát

And this I know: whether the one True Light
Kindle to Love, or Wrath—consume me quite,
One Flash of It within the Tavern caught
Better, than in the Temple lost outright.

What! out of senseless Nothing to provoke
A conscious Something to resent the yoke
Of unpermitted Pleasure, under pain
Of Everlasting Penalties, if broke!

What! from his helpless Creature be repaid
Pure Gold for what he lent him dross-allayed—
Sue for a Debt he never did contract,
And cannot answer—Oh, the sorry trade!

O Thou, who didst with pitfall and with gin
Beset the Road I was to wander in,
Thou wilt not with Predestined Evil round
Enmesh, and then impute my Fall to Sin!

O Thou, who Man of Baser Earth didst make,
And ev'n with Paradise devise the Snake,
For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man
Is blackened—Man's forgiveness give—and take!

As under cover of departing Day
Slunk hunger-stricken Ramazán away,
Once more within the Potter's house alone
I stood, surrounded by the Shapes of Clay—

Shapes of all Sorts and Sizes, great and small,
That stood along the floor and by the wall;
And some loquacious Vessels were; and some
Listened perhaps, but never talked at all.

The Rubáiyát

Said one among them—'Surely not in vain
My substance of the common Earth was ta'en
And to this Figure molded, to be broke,
Or trampled back to shapeless Earth again.'

Then said a Second—'Ne'er a peevish Boy
Would break the Bowl from which he drank in joy;
And He that with his hand the Vessel made
Will surely not in after Wrath destroy.'

After a momentary silence spake
Some Vessel of a more ungainly Make:
'They sneer at me for leaning all awry,
What! did the Hand, then, of the Potter shake?'

Whereat someone of the loquacious Lot—
I think a Súfi pipkin—waxing hot—
'All this of Pot and Potter—Tell me then,
Who is the Potter, pray, and who the Pot?'

'Why,' said another, 'Some there are who tell
Of one who threatens he will toss to Hell
The luckless Pots he marred in making—Pish!
He's a Good Fellow, and 'twill all be well.'

'Well,' murmured one, 'Let whoso make or buy,
My Clay with long Oblivion is gone dry;
But fill me with the old familiar Juice,
Methinks I might recover by and by.'

So while the Vessels one by one were speaking
The little Moon looked in that all were seeking;
And then they jogged each other, 'Brother! Brother!
Now for the Porter's shoulder-knot a-creaking!'

Ah, with the Grape my fading Life provide,
And wash the Body whence the Life has died,
And lay me, shrouded in the living Leaf,
By some not unfrequented Garden-side—

That ev'n my buried Ashes such a snare
Of Vintage shall fling up into the Air
As not a True-believer passing by
But shall be overtaken unaware.

Indeed the Idols I have loved so long
Have done my credit in this World much wrong.
Have drowned my Glory in a shallow Cup,
And sold my Reputation for a Song.

Indeed, indeed, Repentance oft before
I swore—but was I sober when I swore?
And then and then came Spring, and Rose-in-hand
My thread-bare Penitence apieces tore.

And much as Wine has played the Infidel,
And robbed me of my Robe of Honor—Well,
I wonder often what the Vintners buy
One-half so precious as the stuff they sell.

Yet Ah, that Spring should vanish with the Rose!
That Youth's sweet-scented manuscript should close!
The Nightingale that in the branches sang,
Ah whence, and whither flown again, who knows!

Would but the Desert of the Fountain yield
One glimpse—if dimly, yet indeed, revealed,
To which the fainting Traveler might spring,
As springs the trampled herbage of the field.

Song,

Would but some wingèd Angel ere too late
Arrest the yet unfolded Roll of Fate,
And make the stern Recorder otherwise
Enregister, or quite obliterate!

Ah, Lovel could you and I with Him conspire
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
Would not we shatter it to bits—and then
Remold it nearer to the Heart's Desire!

.

Yon rising Moon that looks for us again—
How oft hereafter will she wax and wane;
How oft hereafter rising look for us
Through this same Garden—and for *one* in vain!

And when like her, O Sáki, you shall pass
Among the Guests Star-scattered on the Grass,
And in your joyous errand reach the spot
Where I made *One*—turn down an empty Glass!

EDWARD FITZGERALD

THE HARP THAT ONCE THROUGH TARA'S HALLS

THE harp that once through Tara's halls
The soul of music shed,
Now hangs as mute on Tara's walls
As if that soul were fled.
So sleeps the pride of former days,
So glory's thrill is o'er,

And hearts that once beat high for praise
Now feel that pulse no more!

No more to chiefs and ladies bright
The harp of Tara swells;
The chord alone that breaks at night
Its tale of ruin tells.
Thus Freedom now so seldom wakes,
The only throb she gives
Is when some heart indignant breaks,
To show that still she lives.

THOMAS MOORE

SONG

Ask me no more where Jove bestows,
When Juno is past, the fading rose;
For in your beauty's orient deep
These flowers, as in their causes, sleep.

Ask me no more whither do stray
The golden atoms of the day;
For in pure love heaven did prepare
Those powders to enrich your hair.

Ask me no more whither doth haste
The nightingale when May is past;
For in your sweet dividing throat
She winters and keeps warm her note.

Ask me no more where those stars 'light
That downwards fall in dead of night;

Songs

For in your eyes they sit, and there
Fixèd become as in their sphere.

Ask me no more if east or west
The Phoenix builds her spicy nest;
For unto you at last she flies,
And in your fragrant bosom dies.

THOMAS CAREW

CHERRY-RIPE

THERE is a garden in her face
Where roses and white lilies blow;
A heavenly paradise is that place,
Wherein all pleasant fruits do flow:
There cherries grow which none may buy
Till 'Cherry-ripe' themselves do cry.

Those cherries fairly do enclose
Of orient pearls a double row,
Which when her lovely laughter shows,
They look like rose-buds fill'd with snow;
Yet them nor peer nor prince can buy
Till 'Cherry-ripe' themselves do cry.

Her eyes like angels watch them still;
Her brows like bended bows do stand,
Threat'ning with piercing frowns to kill
All that attempt with eye or hand
Those sacred cherries to come nigh,
Till 'Cherry-ripe' themselves do cry.

THOMAS CAMPION

HUNTING SONG

WAKEN, lords and ladies gay,
On the mountain dawns the day;
All the jolly chase is here
With hawk and horse and hunting-spear;
Hounds are in their couples yelling,
Hawks are whistling, horns are knelling;
Merrily, merrily mingle they,
Waken, lords and ladies gay.

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
The mist has left the mountain gray,
Spriglets in the dawn are streaming,
Diamonds on the brake are gleaming;
And foresters have busy been
To track the buck in thicket green;
Now we come to chant our lay,
Waken, lords and ladies gay.

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
To the greenwood haste away;
We can show you where he lies,
Fleet of foot and tall of size;
We can show the marks he made
When the oak his antlers frayed;
You shall see him brought to bay;
Waken, lords and ladies gay.

Louder, louder chant the lay,
Waken, lords and ladies gay!
Tell them youth and mirth and glee
Run a course as well as we;

Time, stern huntsman! who can baulk,
Staunch as hound and fleet as hawk;
Think of this, and rise with day,
Gentle lords and ladies gay!

SIR WALTER SCOTT

BELIEVE ME, IF ALL THOSE ENDEARING YOUNG CHARMS

BELIEVE me, if all those endearing young charms,
Which I gaze on so fondly today,
Were to change by tomorrow, and fleet in my arms,
Like fairy-gifts fading away,
Thou wouldst still be adored, as this moment thou art.
Let thy loveliness fade as it will,
And around the dear ruin each wish of my heart
Would entwine itself verdantly still.

It is not while beauty and youth are thine own,
And thy cheeks unprofaned by a tear,
That the fervour and faith of a soul can be known,
To which time will but make thee more dear;
No, the heart that has truly loved never forgets,
But as truly loves on to the close,
As the sunflower turns on her god, when he sets,
The same look which she turned when he rose.

THOMAS MOORE

SWEET AFTON

Flow gently, sweet Afton! amang thy green braes,
Flow gently, I'll sing thee a song in thy praise;
My Mary's asleep by thy murmuring stream,
Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream.

Thou stock dove whose echo resounds thro' the glen,
Ye wild whistling blackbirds, in yon thorny den,
Thou green crested lapwing thy screaming forbear,
I charge you, disturb not my slumbering fair.

How lofty, sweet Afton, thy neighbouring hills,
Far mark'd with the courses of clear, winding rills;
There daily I wander as noon rises high,
My flocks and my Mary's sweet cot in my eye.

How pleasant thy banks and green valleys below,
Where, wild in the woodlands, the primroses blow;
There oft, as mild evening weeps over the lea,
The sweet-scented birk shades my Mary and me.

Thy crystal stream, Afton, how lovely it glides,
And winds by the cot where my Mary resides;
How wanton thy waters her snowy feet lave,
As, gathering sweet flowerets, she stems thy clear wave.

Flow gently, sweet Afton, amang thy green braes,
Flow gently, sweet river, the theme of my lays;
My Mary's asleep by thy murmuring stream,
Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream.

ROBERT BURNS

AULD LANG SYNE

SHOULD auld acquaintance be forgot
And never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And auld lang syne!

Chorus

For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne!

We twa hae run about the braes,
And pu'd the gowans fine;
But we've wandered monie a weary foot
Sin' auld lang syne.

We twa hae paidled i' the burn
Frae mornin' sun till dine;
But seas between us braid hae roared
Sin' auld lang syne.

And there's a hand, my trusty fiere,
And gie's a hand o' thine;
And we'll tak a right guid-willie waught,
For auld lang syne.

ROBERT BURNS

gowans) daisies

burn) brook

TO CELIA

DRINK to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine;
Or leave a kiss but in the cup
And I'll not look for wine.
The thirst that from the soul doth rise
Doth ask a drink divine;
But might I of Jove's nectar sup,
I would not change for thine.

I sent thee late a rosy wreath,
Not so much honoring thee
As giving it a hope that there
It could not withered be;
But thou thereon didst only breathe
And sent'st it back to me;
Since when it grows, and smells, I swear
Not of itself but thee!

BEN JONSON

MY HEART'S IN THE HIGHLANDS

My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here;
My heart's in the Highlands a-chasing the deer;
Chasing the wild deer, and following the roe,
My heart's in the Highlands, wherever I go.
Farewell to the Highlands, farewell to the North,
The birthplace of valour, the country of worth;
Wherever I wander, wherever I rove,
The hills of the Highlands for ever I love.

Songs

Farewell to the mountains, high covered with snow;
Farewell to the straths and green valleys below;
Farewell to the forests and wild-hanging woods;
Farewell to the torrents and loud-pouring floods.
My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here;
My heart's in the Highlands a-chasing the deer;
Chasing the wild deer, and following the roe,
My heart's in the Highlands, wherever I go.

ROBERT BURNS

MY LOVE IS LIKE A RED RED ROSE

My love is like a red red rose
That's newly sprung in June:
My love is like the melodie
That's sweetly play'd in tune.

So fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
So deep in love am I:
And I will love thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun:
And I will love thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare thee weel, my only love,
And fare thee weel awhile!
And I will come again, my love,
Tho' it were ten thousand mile.

ROBERT BURNS

SONG

How many times do I love thee, dear?
Tell me how many thoughts there be
In the atmosphere
Of a new-fall'n year,
Whose white and sable hours appear
The latest flake of Eternity:—
So many times do I love thee, dear.

How many times do I love again?
Tell me how many beads there are
In a silver chain
Of evening rain,
Unravell'd from the tumbling main,
And threading the eye of a yellow star:—
So many times do I love again.

THOMAS LOVELL BEDDOES

MADRIGAL

My Love in her attire doth show her wit,
It doth so well become her;
For every season she hath dressings fit,
For Winter, Spring, and Summer.
No beauty she doth miss
When all her robes are on:
But Beauty's self she is
When all her robes are gone.

ANON

(17th Century)

Songs

THE BATTLE-HYMN OF
THE REPUBLIC

Many eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of
wrath are stored;
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift
sword;
His truth is marching on.

I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling
camps;
They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and
damps;
I can read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring
lamps;
His day is marching on.

I have read a fiery gospel, writ in burnished rows of steel:
"As ye deal with my contemnners, so with you my grace
shall deal;
Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with his
heel,
Since God is marching on."

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call
retreat;
He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment-
seat:
Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer Him! be jubilant, my
feet!
Our God is marching on.

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me:
As He died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,
While God is marching on.

JULIA WARD HOWE

BLOW, BLOW, THOU WINTER WIND

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.
Heigh-ho, sing heigh-ho, unto the green holly:
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly.
Then heigh-ho, the holly!
This life is most jolly.

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
That dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot:
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remember'd not.
Heigh-ho, sing heigh-ho, unto the green holly:
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly.
Then heigh-ho, the holly!
This life is most jolly.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

LOVE NOT ME FOR
COMELY GRACE

Love not me for comely grace,
For my pleasing eye or face,
Nor for any outward part,
No, nor for a constant heart:
 For these may fail or turn to ill,
 So thou and I shall sever:
Keep, therefore, a true woman's eye,
And love me still but know not why—
 So hast thou the same reason still
 To doat upon me ever!

ANON
(17th Century)

WEEP NO MORE

WEEP no more, nor sigh, nor groan,
Sorrow calls no time that's gone:
Violets pluck'd, the sweetest rain
Makes not fresh nor grow again.
Trim thy locks, look cheerfully;
Fate's hid ends eyes cannot see.
Joys as wingèd dreams fly fast,
Why should sadness longer last?
Grief is but a wound to woe;
Gentlest fair, mourn, mourn no moe.

JOHN FLETCHER

YOUNG AND OLD

WHEN all the world is young, lad,
And all the trees are green;
And every goose a swan, lad,
And every lass a queen;
Then hey for boot and horse, lad,
And round the world away;
Young blood must have its course, lad,
And every dog his day.

When all the world is old, lad,
And all the trees are brown;
And all the sport is stale, lad,
And all the wheels run down;
Creep home, and take your place there,
The spent and maimed among:
God grant you find one face there,
You loved when all was young.

CHARLES KINGSLEY

COMIN' THRO' THE RYE

Gin a body meet a body
Comin' thro' the rye,
Gin a body kiss a body,
Need a body cry?
Every lassie has her laddie--
Ne'er a ane hae I;
Yet a' the lads they smile at me

Songs

When comin' thro' the rye.
Amang the train there is a swain
I dearly lo'e mysel';
But whaur his hame, or what his name,
I dinna care to tell.

Gin a body meet a body
Comin' frae the town,
Gin a body greet a body,
Need a body frown?
Every lassie has her laddie—
Ne'er a ane hae I;
Yet a' the lads they smile at me
When comin' thro' the rye.
Amang the train there is a swain
I dearly lo'e mysel';
But whaur his hame, or what his name,
I dinna care to tell.

ROBERT BURNS

TAKE, O TAKE THOSE LIPS AWAY

TAKE, O take those lips away,
That so sweetly were forsworn;
And those eyes, the break of day,
Lights that do mislead the morn:
But my kisses bring again,
Bring again;
Seals of love, but sealed in vain,
Sealed in vain.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

SIGH NO MORE, LADIES

SIGH no more, ladies, sigh no more,
Men were deceivers ever,
One foot in sea and one on shore,
To one thing constant never:
Then sigh not so, but let them go,
And be you blithe and bonny,
Converting all your sounds of woe
Into Hey nonny, nonny.

Sing no more ditties, sing no more,
Of dumps so dull and heavy;
The fraud of men was ever so,
Since summer first was leafy:
Then sigh not so, but let them go,
And be you blithe and bonny,
Converting all your sounds of woe
Into Hey nonny, nonny.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

SONG

WHO is Silvia? what is she,
That all our swains commend her?
Holy, fair, and wise is she;
The heaven such grace did lend her,
That she might admiréd be.

Is she kind as she is fair?
 For beauty lives with kindness.
 Love doth to her eyes repair,
 To help him of his blindness,
 And, being help'd, inhabits there.

Then to Silvia let us sing,
 That Silvia is excelling;
 She excels each mortal thing
 Upon the dull earth dwelling:
 To her let us garlands bring.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

HOW SHOULD I YOUR TRUE LOVE KNOW

How should I your true love know
 From another one?
 By his cockle hat and staff
 And his sandal shoon.

He is dead and gone, lady,
 He is dead and gone;
 At his head a grass-green turf,
 At his heels a stone.

White his shroud as the mountain snow,
 Larded with sweet flowers;
 Which bewept to the grave did go
 With true-love showers.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

A BOY'S SONG

WHERE the pools are bright and deep,
Where the grey trout lies asleep,
Up the river and over the lea,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the blackbird sings the latest,
Where the hawthorn blooms the sweetest,
Where the nestlings chirp and flee,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the mowers mow the cleanest,
Where the hay lies thick and greenest,
There to track the homeward bee,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the hazel bank is steepest,
Where the shadow falls the deepest,
Where the clustering nuts fall free,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Why the boys should drive away
Little sweet maidens from the play,
Or love to banter and fight so well,
That's the thing I never could tell.

But this I know, I love to play
Through the meadow, among the hay;
Up the water and over the lea,
That's the way for Billy and me.

TELL ME WHERE IS
FANCY BRED

TELL me where is fancy bred,
Or in the heart or in the head?
How begot, how nourishéd?

Reply, reply.

It is engender'd in the eyes,
With gazing fed; and fancy dies
In the cradle where it lies.

Let us all ring fancy's knell;
I'll begin it--Ding, dong, bell.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

REEDS OF INNOCENCE

PIPING down the valleys wild,
Piping songs of pleasant glee,
On a cloud I saw a child,
And he laughing said to me:

'Pipe a song about a Lamb!'
So I piped with merry cheer.
'Piper, pipe that song again;'
So I piped: he wept to hear.

'Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe;
Sing thy songs of happy cheer!'
So I sung the same again,
While he wept with joy to hear.

'Piper, sit thee down and write
In a book that all may read.'
So he vanish'd from my sight;
And I pluck'd a hollow reed,

And I made a rural pen,
And I stain'd the water clear,
And I wrote my happy songs
Every child may joy to hear.

WILLIAM BLAKE

SONG

How sweet I roam'd from field to field
And tasted all the summer's pride,
Till I the Prince of Love beheld
Who in the sunny beams did glide!

He show'd me lilies for my hair,
And blushing roses for my brow;
He led me through his gardens fair
Where all his golden pleasures grow.

With sweet May dew's my wings were wet,
And Phœbus fir'd my vocal rage;
He caught me in his silken net,
And shut me in his golden cage.

He loves to sit and hear me sing,
Then, laughing, sports and plays with me;
Then stretches out my golden wing,
And mocks my loss of liberty.

WILLIAM BLAKE

MADRIGAL

THIS life which seems so fair
Is like a bubble blown up in the air
By sporting children's breath,
Who chase it everywhere,
And strive who can most motion it bequeath.
And though it sometime seem of its own might,
Like to an eye of gold, to be fixt there,
And firm to hover in that empty height,
That only is because it is so light;
But in that pomp it doth not long appear;
For even when most admired, it in a thought,
As swelled from nothing, doth dissolve in nought.

WILLIAM DRUMMOND

ANNIE LAURIE

MAXWELTON's braes are bonnie
Where early fa's the dew,
And it's there that Annie Laurie
Gie'd me her promise true;
Gie'd me her promise true,
Which ne'er forgot will be;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I'd lay me down and dee.

Her brow is like the snaw drift;
Her throat is like the swan;
Her face it is the fairest
That e'er the sun shone on—
That e'er the sun shone on—

And dark blue is her ee;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I'd lay me doun and dee.

Like dew on the gowan lying
Is the fa' o' her fairy feet;
And like the winds in summer sighing,
Her voice is low and sweet—
Her voice is low and sweet—
And she's a' the world to me;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I'd lay me doun and dee.

WILLIAM DOUGLAS

SONG

WHEN that I was and a little tiny boy,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,
A foolish thing was but a toy,
For the rain it raineth every day.

But when I came to man's estate,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,
'Gainst knaves and thieves men shut their gate,
For the rain it raineth every day.

But when I came, alas, to wive,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,
By swaggering could I never thrive,
For the rain it raineth every day.

But when I came unto my beds,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,

The devotion to something afar

With toss-pots still had drunken heads,
For the rain it raineth every day.

A great while ago the world begun,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,
But that's all one, our play is done,
And we'll strive to please you every day.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

ONE WORD IS TOO OFTEN
PROFANED

. ONE word is too often profaned
For me to profane it;
One feeling too falsely disdain'd
For thee to disdain it;
One hope is too like despair
For prudence to smother;
And pity from thee more dear
Than that from another.

I can give not what men call love:
But wilt thou accept not
The worship the heart lifts above
And the heavens reject not,
The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow?

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLE:

from the sphere of our sorrow

SESTINA

STREPHON

You goat-herd Gods, that love the grassy mountains,
You nymphs that haunt the springs in pleasant valleys,
You Satyrs joyed with free and quiet forests,
Vouchsafe your silent ears to playning music,
Which to my woes gives still an early morning:
And draws the dolor on till weary evening.

KLAIUS

O Mercury, forgoer to the evening,
O heavenly huntress of the savage mountains,
O lovely star, entitled of the morning,
While that my voice doth fill the woeful valleys
Vouchsafe your silent ears to playning music,
Which oft doth *Echo* tired in secret forests.

STREPHON

I that was once free-burgess of the forests
Where shade from sun, and sports I sought at evening,
I that was once esteemed for pleasant music,
Am banished now among the monstrous mountains
Of huge despair, and foul affliction's valleys,
Am grown a screech-owl to myself each morning.

KLAIUS

I that was once delighted every morning,
Hunting the wild inhabitants of forests,
I that was once the music of these valleys,
So darkened am, that all my day is evening,
Heart-broken so, that mole-hills seem high mountains,
And fill the vales with cries instead of music.

The devotion to something other

STREPHON

Long since, alas, my deadly Swannish music
Hath made itself a crier of the morning,
And hath with wailing strength climbed highest mountains:

Long since my thoughts more desert be than forests:
Long since I see my joys come to their evening,
And state thrown down to over-trodden valleys.

KLAUS

Long since the happy dwellers of these valleys,
Have prayed me leave my strange exclaiming music,
Which troubles their day's work, and joys of evening:
Long since I hate the night, more hate the morning:
Long since my thoughts chase me like beasts in forests,
And make me wish myself laid under mountains.

STREPHON

Meseems I see the high and stately mountains
Transform themselves to low dejected valleys:
Meseems I hear in these ill-changed forests
The nightingales do learn of owls their music:
Meseems I feel the comfort of the morning
Turned to the mortal serene of an evening.

KLAUS

Meseems I see a filthy cloudy evening,
As soon as sun begins to climb the mountains:
Meseems I feel a noisome scent, the morning
When I do smell the flowers of these valleys:
Meseems I hear, when I do hear sweet music,
The dreadful cries of murdered men in forests.

STREPHON

I wish to fire the trees of all these forests;
I give the sun a last farewell each evening;

from the sphere of our sorrow

curse the fiddling finders out of music:
 With envy do I hate the lofty mountains;
 And with despite despise the humble valleys:
 I do detest night, evening, day, and morning.

KLAJUS

Curse of myself my prayer is, the morning:
My fire is more, than can be made with forests;
My state more base, than are the basest valleys:
I wish no evening more to see, each evening;
Shamed I have myself in sight of mountains,
And stop mine ears, lest I go mad with music.

STREPHION

For she, whose parts maintained a perfect music,
Whose beauty shined more than the blushing morning,
Who much did pass in state the stately mountains,
In straightness passed the cedars of the forests,
Hath cast me wretch into eternal evening,
By taking her two suns from these dark valleys.

KLAIUS

For she, to whom compared, the Alps are valleys,
She, whose least word brings from the spheres their music,
At whose approach the sun rose in the evening,
Who, where she went, bare in her forehead morning,
Is gone, is gone from these our spoiled forests,
Turning to deserts our best pastured mountains.

STREPHON These mountains witness shall, so shall these valleys.

KLAIUS These forests eke, made wretched by our
 music,

STREPHON Our morning hymn is this,

KLAIUS and song at evening.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

The devotion to something afar

THE SOLITARY REAPER

BEHOLD her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland lass!
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen! for the vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No nightingale did ever chaunt
More welcome notes to weary bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands:
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?—
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago:
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again?

Whate'er the theme, the maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending;—

from the sphere of our sorrow

I listened, motionless and still;
And, as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thine happiness,—
That thou, light-wingèd Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

O, for a draught of vintage! that hath been
Cooled a long age in the deep-delvèd earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth!
O for a beaker full of the warm South,
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim
And purple-stainèd mouth;
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim:

The devotion to something afar

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last grey hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies,<
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs,
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
Already with thee! tender is the night,
And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
Clustered around by all her starry Fays;
But here there is no light,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy
ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalmèd darkness, guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;
Fast fading violets covered up in leaves;
And mid-May's eldest child,
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

from the sphere of our sorrow

Darkling I listen; and for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Called him soft names in many a musèd rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy!
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown:
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
The same that oft-times hath
Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is fabled to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
In the next valley-glades:
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music:—Do I wake or sleep?

JOHN KEATS

The devotion to something afar

NON SUM QUALIS ERAM BONAE
SUB REGNO CYNARAE

LAST night, ah, yesternight, betwixt her lips and mine
There fell thy shadow, Cynara! thy breath was shed
Upon my soul between the kisses and the wine;
And I was desolate and sick of an old passion,
 Yea, I was desolate and bow'd my head:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

All night upon mine heart I felt her warm heart beat,
Night-long within mine arms in love and sleep she lay;
Surely the kisses of her bright red mouth were sweet;
But I was desolate and sick of an old passion,
 When I awoke and found the dawn was gray:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

I have forgot much, Cynara! gone with the wind,
Flung roses, roses, riotously with the throng,
Dancing, to put thy pale lost lilies out of mind;
But I was desolate and sick of an old passion,
 Yea, all the time, because the dance was long:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

I cried for madder music and for stronger wine,
But when the feast is finish'd and the lamps expire,
Then falls thy shadow, Cynara! the night is thine;
And I am desolate and sick of an old passion,
 Yea, hungry for the lips of my desire:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

ERNEST DOWSON

from the sphere of our sorrow

TO A SKYLARK

HAIL to thee, blithe spirit!
Bird thou never wert—
That from heaven or near it
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest,
Like a cloud of fire;
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden light'ning
Of the sunken sun,
O'er which clouds are bright'ning,
Thou dost float and run,
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of heaven,
In the broad daylight
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight—

Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear,
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,

The devotion to something afar

As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is overflow'd,

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see,
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody:—

Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower:

Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its aerial hue
Among the flowers and grass which screen it from the
view:

Like a rose embower'd
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflower'd,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-winged
thieves:

from the sphere of our sorrow

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awaken'd flowers—
All that ever was
Joyous and clear and fresh—thy music doth surpass.

Teach us, sprite or bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine:
I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus hymeneal,
Or triumphal chant,
Match'd with thine would be all
But an empty vaunt—
A thing whercin we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain?
What fields, or waves, or mountains?
What shapes of sky or plain?
What love of thine own kind? what ignorance of pain?

With thy clear keen joyance
Languor cannot be:
Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee:
Thou lovest, but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

Waking or asleep,
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream,
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?

The devotion to something afar

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not:
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

Yet, if we could scorn
Hate and pride and fear,
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know;
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow,
The world should listen then, as I am listening now.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

THE LOTOS-EATERS: CHORIC SONG

THERE is sweet music here that softer falls
Than petals from blown roses on the grass,
Or night-dews on still waters between walls
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass;

from the sphere of our sorrow

Music that gentlier on the spirit lies,
Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes;
Music that brings sweet sleep down from the blissful
skies.

Here are cool mosses deep,
And thro' the moss the ivies creep,
And in the stream the long-leaved flowers weep,
And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in sleep.

Why are we weigh'd upon with heaviness,
And utterly consumed with sharp distress,
While all things else have rest from weariness?
All things have rest: why should we toil alone,
We only toil, who are the first of things,
And make perpetual moan,
Still from one sorrow to another thrown:
Nor ever fold our wings,
And cease from wanderings,
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm;
Nor harken what the inner spirit sings,
"There is no joy but calm!"
Why should we only toil, the roof and crown of things?

Lo! in the middle of the wood,
The folded leaf is woo'd from out the bud
With winds upon the branch, and there
Grows green and broad, and takes no care,
Sun-steep'd at noon, and in the moon
Nightly dew-fed; and turning yellow
Falls, and floats adown the air.
Lo! sweeten'd with the summer light,
The full-juiced apple, waxing over-mellow,
Drops in a silent autumn night.
All its allotted length of days,
The flower ripens in its place,

The devotion to something afar

Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no toil
Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,
Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.
Death is the end of life; ah, why
Should life all labour be?
Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,
And in a little while our lips are dumb.
Let us alone. What is it that will last?
All things are taken from us, and become
Portions and parcels of the dreadful Past.
Let us alone. What pleasure can we have
To war with evil? Is there any peace
In ever climbing up the climbing wave?
All things have rest, and ripen toward the grave
In silence; ripen, fall and cease:
Give us long rest or death, dark death, or dreamful ease.

How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream,
With half-shut eyes ever to seem
Falling asleep in a half-dream!
To dream and dream, like yonder amber light,
Which will not leave the myrrh-bush on the height;
To hear each other's whisper'd speech;
Eating the Lotos day by day,
To watch the crisping ripples on the beach,
And tender curving lines of creamy spray;
To lend our hearts and spirits wholly
To the influence of mild-minded melancholy;
To muse and brood and live again in memory,
With those old faces of our infancy
Heap'd over with a mound of grass,
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an urn of brass!

314

from the sphere of our sorrow

Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,
And dear the last embraces of our wives
And their warm tears: but all hath suffer'd change:
For surely now our household hearts are cold:
Our sons inherit us: our looks are strange:
And we should come like ghosts to trouble joy.
Or else the island princes over-bold
Have eat our substance, and the minstrel sings
Before them of the ten years' war in Troy,
And our great deeds, as half-forgotten things.
Is there confusion in the little isle?

Let what is broken so remain.
The Gods are hard to reconcile:
'Tis hard to settle order once again.
There *is* confusion worse than death,
Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,
Long labour unto aged breath,
Sore task to hearts worn out by many wars
And eyes grown dim with gazing on the pilot-stars.

But, propt on beds of amaranth and moly,
How sweet (while warm airs lull us, blowing lowly)
With half-dropt eyelid still,
Beneath a heaven dark and holy,
To watch the long bright river drawing slowly
His waters from the purple hill—
To hear the dewy echoes calling
From cave to cave thro' the thick-twined vine—
'To watch the emerald-colour'd water falling
Thro' many a wov'n acanthus-wreath divine!
Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling brine,
Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out beneath the pine.

The Lotos blooms below the barren peak:
The Lotos blows by every winding creek:
All day the wind breathes low with mellow tone;

The devotion to something afar

Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone
Round and round the spicy downs the yellow Lotos-dust
is blown.

We have had enough of action, and of motion we,
Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard, when the surge was
seething free,

Where the wallowing monster spouted his foam-foun-
tains in the sea.

Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an equal mind,
In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie reclined
On the hills like Gods together, careless of mankind.
For they lie beside their nectar, and the bolts are hurl'd
Far below them in the valleys, and the clouds are lightly
curl'd

Round their golden houses, girdled with the gleaming
world:

Where they smile in secret, looking over wasted lands,
Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring deeps
and fiery sands,

Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and sinking ships,
and praying hands.

But they smile, they find a music centred in a doleful song
Steaming up, a lamentation and an ancient tale of wrong,
Like a tale of little meaning tho' the words are strong;
Chanted from an ill-used race of men that cleave the soil,
Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with enduring toil,
Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and wine and oil;
Till they perish and they suffer—some, 'tis whisper'd—
down in hell

Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian valleys dwell,
Resting weary limbs at last on beds of asphodel.

Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil, the shore
Than labor in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave and oar;
Oh rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

from the sphere of our sorrow

PRAISE FOR AN URN

It was a kind and northern face
That mingled in such exile guise
The everlasting eyes of Picrot
And, of Gargantua, the laughter.

His thoughts, delivered to me
From the white coverlet and pillow,
I see now, were inheritances—
Delicate riders of the storm.

The slant moon on the slanting hill
Once moved us toward presentiments
Of what the dead keep, living still,
And such assessments of the soul

As, perched in the crematory lobby,
The insistent clock commented on,
Touching as well upon our praise
Of glories proper to the time.

Still, having in mind gold hair,
I cannot see that broken brow
And miss the dry sound of bees
Stretching across a lucid space.

Scatter these well-meant idioms
Into the smoky spring that fills
The suburbs, where they will be lost.
They are no trophies of the sun.

HART CRANE

The devotion to something afar

DOVER BEACH

THE sea is calm to-night.
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits;—on the French coast the light
Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the sea meets the moon-blanch'd land,
Listen! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,
At their return, up the high strand,
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Ægean, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The Sea of Faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled.
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems

from the sphere of our sorrow

To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

MATTHEW ARNOLD

BLOW, BUGLE, BLOW

THE splendour falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story:
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!
O sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river:
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

The devotion to something afar

O VIRTUOUS LIGHT

A PRIVATE madness has prevailed
Over the pure and valiant mind;
The instrument of reason failed
And the star-gazing eyes struck blind.

Sudden excess of light has wrought
Confusion in the secret place
Where the slow miracles of thought
Take shape through patience into grace.

Mysterious as steel and flint
The birth of this destructive spark
Whose inward growth has power to print
Strange suns upon the natural dark.

O break the walls of sense in half
And make the spirit fugitive!
This light begotten of itself
Is not a light by which to live!

The fire of farthing tallow dips
Dispels the menace of the skies
So it illuminate the lips
And enter the discerning eyes.

O virtuous light, if thou be man's
Or matter of the meteor stone,
Prevail against this radiance
Which is engendered of its own!

ELINOR WYLIE

from the sphere of our sorrow

THE HAUNTED PALACE

IN the greenest of our valleys
By good angels tenanted,
Once a fair and stately palace—
Radiant palace—reared its head.
In the monarch Thought's dominion—
It stood there!
Never seraph spread a pinion
Over fabric half so fair!

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,
On its roof did float and flow,
(This—all this—was in the olden
Time long ago,)
And every gentle air that dallied,
In that sweet day,
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,
A wingéd odour went away.

Wanderers in that happy valley,
Through two luminous windows, saw
Spirits moving musically,
To a lute's well-tuned law,
Round about a throne where, sitting
(Porphyrogenet!)
In state his glory well-befitting,
The ruler of the realm was seen.

And all with pearl and ruby glowing
Was the fair palace door,
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing,
And sparkling evermore,
A troop of Echoes, whose sweet duty

The devotion to something afar

Was but to sing,
In voices of surpassing beauty,
The wit and wisdom of their king.

But evil things, in robes of sorrow,
Assailed the monarch's high estate.
(Ah, let us mourn!—for never morrow
Shall dawn upon him desolate!)
And round about his home the glory
That blushed and bloomed,
Is but a dim-remembered story
Of the old time entombed.

And travellers, now, within that valley,
Through the red-litten windows see
Vast forms, that move fantastically
To a discordant melody,
While, like a ghastly rapid river,
Through the pale door
A hideous throng rush out forever
And laugh—but smile no more.

EDGAR ALLAN POE

EUCLID ALONE HAS LOOKED
ON BEAUTY BARE

EUCLID alone has looked on Beauty bare.
Let all who prate of Beauty hold their peace,
And lay them prone upon the earth and cease
To ponder on themselves, the while they stare
At nothing, intricately drawn nowhere

from the sphere of our sorrow

In shapes of shifting lineage; let geese
Cabble and hiss, but heroes seek release
From dusty bondage into luminous air.

O blinding hour, O holy, terrible day,
When first the shaft into his vision shone
Of light anatomized! Euclid alone
Has looked on Beauty bare. Fortunate they
Who, though once only and then but far away,
Have heard her massive sandal set on stone.

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US

THE world is too much with us: late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon;
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not.—Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

The devotion to something afar

LOST ACRES

THESE acres, always again lost
By every new Ordnance-survey
And searched for at exhausting cost
Of time and thought, are still away.

They have their paper-substitute—
Intercalation of an inch
At the so many thousandth foot:
And no one parish feels the pinch.

But lost they are, despite all care,
So perhaps likeliest to be bound
Together in a piece somewhere,
A plot of undiscovered ground.

Invisible, they have the spite
To swerve the tautest measuring chain
And the exact theodolite
Perched every side of them in vain.

Yet there's no scientific need
To plot these acres of the mind
With prehistoric fern and reed
And monsters such as heroes find.

They have, no doubt, their flowers, their birds,
Their trees behind the phantom fence,
But of the substance of mere words:
To walk there would be loss of sense.

ROBERT GRAVES

from the sphere of our sorrow

ULALUME

THE skies they were ashen and sober;
The leaves they were crispèd and sere,
The leaves they were withering and sere;
It was night in the lonesome October
Of my most immemorial year;
It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,
In the misty mid region of Weir:
It was down by the dank tarn of Auber,
In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

Here once, through an alley Titanic
Of cypress, I roamed with my Soul—
Of cypress, with Psyche, my Soul.
These were days when my heart was volcanic
As the scoriac rivers that roll,
As the lavas that restlessly roll
Their sulphurous currents down Yaanek
In the ultimate climes of the pole,
That groan as they roll down Mount Yaanek
In the realms of the boreal-pole.

Our talk had been serious and sober,
But our thoughts they were palsied and sere,
Our memories were treacherous and sere,
For we knew not the month was October,
And we marked not the night of the year,
(Ah, night of all nights in the year!)
We noted not the dim lake of Auber
(Though once we had journeyed down here),
Remembered not the dank tarn of Auber
Nor the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

The devotion to something afar

And now, as the night was senescent
And star-dials pointed to morn,
As the star-dials hinted of morn,
At the end of our path a liquescent
And nebulous lustre was born,
Out of which a miraculous crescent
Arose with a duplicate horn,
Astarte's bediamonded crescent
Distinct with its duplicate horn.

And I said—"She is warmer than Dian:
She rolls through an ether of sighs,
She revels in a region of sighs:
She has seen that the tears are not dry on
These cheeks, where the worm never dies,
And has come past the stars of the Lion
To point us the path to the skies,
To the Lethean peace of the skies:
Come up, in despite of the Lion,
To shine on us with her bright eyes:
Come up through the lair of the Lion,
With love in her luminous eyes."

But Psyche, uplifting her finger,
Said—"Sadly this star I mistrust,
Her pallor I strangely mistrust:
Oh, hasten!—oh, let us not linger!
Oh, fly!—let us fly!—for we must."
In terror she spoke, letting sink her
Wings until they trailed in the dust;
In agony sobbed, letting sink her
Plumes till they trailed in the dust,
Till they sorrowfully trailed in the dust.

I replied—"This is nothing but dreaming:
Let us on by this tremulous light!

from the sphere of our sorrow

Let us bathe in this crystalline light!
Its sibyllic splendor is beaming
With hope and in beauty to-night:
See, it flickers up the sky through the night!
Ah, we safely may trust to its gleaming,
And be sure it will lead us aright:
We safely may trust to a gleaming
That cannot but guide us aright,
Since it flickers up to Heaven through the night."

Thus I pacified Psyche and kissed her,
And tempted her out of her gloom,
And conquered her scruples and gloom;
And we passed to the end of the vista,
But were stopped by the door of a tomb,
By the door of a legended tomb;
And I said—"What is written, sweet sister,
On the door of this legended tomb?"
She replied—"Ulalume—Ulalume—
'Tis the vault of thy lost Ulalume!"

Then my heart it grew ashen and sober
As the leaves that were crispèd and sere,
As the leaves that were withering and sere,
And I cried—"It was surely October
On this very night of last year
That I journeyed—I journeyed down here,
That I brought a dread burden down here:
On this night of all nights in the year,
Ah, what demon has tempted me here?
Well I know, now, this dim lake of Auber,
This misty mid region of Weir:
Well I know, now, this dank tarn of Auber,
This ghoulish-haunted woodland of Weir."

EDGAR ALLAN POE

327

LOVE WILL FIND OUT
THE WAY

Over the mountains
And over the waves,
Under the fountains
And under the graves;
Under floods that are deepest,
Which Neptune obey,
Over rocks that are steepest,
Love will find out the way.

When there is no place
For the glow-worm to lie,
When there is no space
For receipt of a fly;
When the midge dares not venture
Lest herself fast she lay,
If Love come, he will enter
And will find out the way.

You may esteem him
A child for his might;
Or you may deem him
A coward for his flight;
But if she whom Love doth honour
Be conceal'd from the day—
Set a thousand guards upon her,
Love will find out the way.

Some think to lose him
By having him confined;
And some do suppose him,
Poor heart! to be blind;

But if ne'er so close ye wall him,
Do the best that ye may,
Blind Love, if so ye call him,
He will find out his way.

You may train the eagle
To stoop to your fist;
Or you may inveigle
The Phcenix of the east;
The lioness, you may move her
To give over her prey;
But you'll ne'er stop a lover—
He will find out the way.

If the earth it should part him,
He would gallop it o'er;
If the seas should o'erthwart him,
He would swim to the shore;
Should his Love become a swallow,
Through the air to stray,
Love will lend wings to follow,
And will find out the way.

There is no striving
To cross his intent;
There is no contriving
His plots to prevent;
But if once the message greet him
That his True Love doth stay,
If Death should come and meet him,
Love will find out the way!

ANON

THE LOVER IN WINTER
PLAINETH FOR THE SPRING

WESTERN wind, when will thou blow
The small rain down can rain?
Christ, if my love were in my arms
And I in my bed again!

ANON
16th Century (?)

NO, NO, POOR SUFFERING HEART

No, no, poor suffering heart, no change endeavour;
Choose to sustain the smart rather than leave her;
My ravished eyes behold such charms about her,
I can die with her, but not live without her.
One tender sigh of hers to see me languish
Will more than pay the price of my past anguish;
Beware, O cruel fair, how you smile on me,
'Twas a kind look of yours that has undone me.

Love has in store for me one happy minute,
And she will end my pain who did begin it;
Then no day void of bliss or pleasure leaving
Ages shall slide away without perceiving:
Cupid shall guard the door the more to please us,
And keep out time and death when they would seize us;
Time and death shall depart and say in flying
Love has found out a way to live, by dying.

JOHN DRYDEN

THE NIGHT HAS A
THOUSAND EYES

THE night has a thousand eyes,
And the day but one;
Yet the light of the bright world dies
With the dying sun.

The mind has a thousand eyes,
And the heart but one;
Yet the light of a whole life dies
When love is done.

FRANCIS WILLIAM BOURDILLON

TO MYRA

I, WITH whose colors Myra dressed her head,
I, that wear posies of her own hand-making,
I, that mine own name in the chimneys read
By Myra finely wrought ere I was waking;
Must I look on, in hope time coming may
With change bring back my turn again to play?

I, that on Sunday at the church-stile found
A garland sweet with true-love knots in flowers,
Which I to wear about mine arms was bound,
That each of us might know that all was ours;
Must I now lead an idle life in wishes,
And follow Cupid for his loaves and fishes?

Love

I, that did wear the ring her mother left,
I, for whose love she gloried to be blamed,
I, with whose eyes her eyes committed theft,
I, who did make her blush when I was named;
 Must I lose ring, flowers, blush, theft, and go naked,
 Watching with sighs till dead love be awakéd?

I, that when drowsy Argus fell asleep,
Like jealousy o'erwatchéd with desire,
Was ever warnéd modesty to keep,
While her breath speaking kindled Nature's fire;
 Must I look on a-cold, while others warm them?
 Do Vulcan's brothers in such fine nets arm them?

Was it for this that I might Myra see
Washing the water with her beauties white?
Yet would she never write her love to me,
Thinks wit of change while thoughts are in delight?
 Mad girls must safely love, as they may leave;
 No man can print a kiss; lines may deceive.

FULKE GREVILLE, LORD BROOKE

A BIRTHDAY

My heart is like a singing bird
 Whose nest is in a watered shoot;
My heart is like an apple-tree
 Whose boughs are bent with thick-set fruit;
My heart is like a rainbow shell
 That paddles in a halcyon sea;
My heart is gladder than all these,
 Because my love is come to me.

Raise me a dais of silk and down;
Hang it with vair and purple dyes;
Carve it in doves and pomegranates,
And peacocks with a hundred eyes;
Work it in gold and silver grapes,
In leaves and silver fleurs-de-lys;
Because the birthday of my life
Is come, my love is come to me.

CHRISTINA GEORGINA ROSSETTI

THE HIGHWAY

HIGHWAY, since you my chief Parnassus be,
And that my Muse, to some ears not unsweet,
Tempers her words to trampling horses' feet
More oft than to a chamber-melody,—
Now blessèd you bear onward blessèd me
To her, where I my heart, safe-left, shall meet;
My Muse and I must you of duty greet
With thanks and wishes, wishing thankfully;

Be you still fair, honour'd by public heed;
By no encroachment wrong'd, nor time forgot;
Nor blamed for blood, nor shamed for sinful deed;
And that you know I envy you no lot
Of highest wish, I wish you so much bliss,
Hundreds of years you Stella's feet may kiss!

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

TO HIS COY MISTRESS

HAD we but world enough, and time,
This coyness, Lady, were no crime.
We would sit down, and think which way
To walk and pass our long love's day.
Thou by the Indian Ganges' side
Shouldst rubies find: I by the tide
Of Humber would complain. I would
Love you ten years before the Flood;
And you should, if you please, refuse
Till the conversion of the Jews.
My vegetable love should grow
Vaster than empires, and more slow:
An hundred years should go to praise
Thine eyes and on thy forehead gaze;
Two hundred to adore each breast,
But thirty thousand to the rest;
An age at least to every part,
And the last age should show your heart.
For, Lady, you deserve this state;
Nor would I love at lower rate.

But at my back I always hear
Time's wingèd chariot hurrying near;
And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast eternity
Thy beauty shall no more be found,
Nor, in thy marble vault, shall sound
My echoing song: then worms shall try
That long preserv'd virginity,
And your quaint honour turn to dust,
And into ashes all my lust.
The grave's a fine and private place,
But none I think do there embrace.

Now therefore, while the youthful hue
Sits on thy skin like morning dew,
And while thy willing soul transpires
At every pore with instant fires,
Now let us sport us while we may,
And now, like amorous birds of prey,
Rather at once our time devour
Than languish in his slow-chapt power.
Let us roll all our strength and all
Our sweetness up into one ball,
And tear our pleasures with rough strife
Thorough the iron gates of life.
Thus, though we cannot make our sun
Stand still, yet we will make him run.

ANDREW MARVELL

SWEET-AND-TWENTY

O MISTRESS mine, where are you roaming?
O, stay and hear! your true love's coming,
That can sing both high and low:
Trip no further, pretty sweeting;
Journeys end in lovers meeting,
Every wise man's son doth know.
What is love? 'tis not hereafter;
Present mirth hath present laughter;
What's to come is still unsure:
In delay there lies no plenty;
Then come kiss me, sweet-and-twenty!
Youth's a stuff will not endure.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

THE DEFINITION OF LOVE

My love is of a birth as rare
As 'tis for object strange and high;
It was begotten by despair
Upon impossibility.

Magnanimous despair alone
Could show me so divine a thing,
Where feeble hope could ne'er have flown
But vainly flap its tinsel wing.

And yet I quickly might arrive
Where my extended soul is fixt,
But fate does iron wedges drive,
And alwaies crouds it self betwixt.

For fate with jealous eye does see
Two perfect loves, nor lets them close;
Their union would her ruin be,
And her tyrannic pow'r depose.

And therefore her decrees of steel
Us as the distant poles have plac'd,
(Though loves whole world on us doth wheel)
Not by themselves to be embrac'd.

Unless the giddy heaven fall,
And earth some new convulsion tear;
And, us to joyn, the world should all
Be cramp'd into a planisphere.

As lines, so loves, oblique may well
Themselves in every angle greet;

But ours so truly parallel,
Though infinite, can never meet.

Therefore the love which us doth bind,
But fate so enviously debars,
Is the conjunction of the mind,
And opposition of the stars.

ANDREW MARVELL

THE INDIAN SERENADE

I *ARISE* from dreams of thee
In the first sweet sleep of night,
When the winds are breathing low,
And the stars are shining bright.
I arise from dreams of thee,
And a spirit in my feet
Hath led me—who knows how?
To thy chamber window, Sweet!

The wandering airs they faint
On the dark, the silent stream—
And the Champak's odours pine
Like sweet thoughts in a dream;
The nightingale's complaint,
It dies upon her heart,
As I must on thine,
O belovèd as thou art!

O lift me from the grass!
I die! I faint! I fail!
Let thy love in kisses rain

Love

On my lips and eyelids pale.
My cheek is cold and white, alas!
My heart beats loud and fast:
O press it to thine own again,
Where it will break at last!

PERCY BYSSHE SHIELLEY

BREAK OF DAY

'Tis true, 'tis day; what though it be?
Oh, wilt thou therefore rise from me?
Why should we rise because 'tis light?
Did we lie down because 'twas night?
Love which in spite of darkness brought us hither,
Should in despite of light keep us together.

Light hath no tongue, but is all eye;
If it could speak as well as spy,
This were the worst that it could say,
That being well I fain would stay,
And that I loved my heart and honour so
That I would not from him, that had them, go.

Must business thee from hence remove?
Oh, that's the worst disease of love,
The poor, the foul, the false, love can
Admit, but not the busied man.
He which hath business, and makes love, doth do
Such wrong as when a married man doth woo.

JOHN DONNE

COME, SLEEP

COME, Sleep; O Sleep! the certain knot of peace,
The baiting-place of wit, the balm of woe,
The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
Th'indifferent judge between the high and low;
With shield of proof shield me from out the prease
Of those fierce darts Despair at me doth throw:
O make in me those civil wars to cease;
I will good tribute pay, if thou do so.
Take thou of me smooth pillows, sweetest bed,
A chamber deaf to noise and blind of light,
A rosy garland and a weary head;
And if these things, as being thine by right,
Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me,
Livelier than elsewhere, Stella's image see.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

MY LOVE IS LIKE TO ICE

My Love is like to ice, and I to fire:
How comes it then that this her cold so great
Is not dissolved through my so hot desire,
But harder grows the more I her entreat?
Or how comes it that my exceeding heat
Is not allayed by her heart-frozen cold,
But that I burn much more in boiling sweat,
And feel my flames augmented manifold?
What more miraculous thing may be told,
That fire, which all things melts, should harden ice,

Love

And ice, which is congealed with senseless cold,
Should kindle fire by wonderful device?
Such is the power of love in gentle mind,
That it can alter all the course of kind.

EDMUND SPENSER

I ENVY NOT IN ANY MOODS

I ENVY not in any moods
The captive void of noble rage,
The linnet born within the cage,
That never knew the summer woods:

I envy not the beast that takes
His license in the field of time,
Unfetter'd by the sense of crime,
To whom a conscience never wakes;

Nor, what may count itself as blest,
The heart that never plighted troth,
But stagnates in the weeds of sloth,
Nor any want-begotten rest.

I hold it true, whate'er befall;
I feel it, when I sorrow most;
'Tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

MY LOVE IS STRENGTHEN'D

My love is strengthen'd, though more weak in seeming;
I love not less, though less the show appear:
That love is merchandised whose rich esteeming
The owner's tongue doth publish everywhere.
Our love was new, and then but in the spring,
When I was wont to greet it with my lays;
As Philomel in Summer's front doth sing
And stops her pipe in growth of riper days:
Not that the Summer is less pleasant now
Than when her mournful hymns did hush the night,
But that wild music burthens every bough,
And sweets grown common lose their dear delight.
Therefore, like her, I sometime hold my tongue,
Because I would not dull you with my song.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

FAREWELL, UNGRATEFUL TRAITOR

FAREWELL, ungrateful traitor,
Farewell, my perjured swain;
Let never injured creature
Believe a man again.
The pleasure of possessing
Surpasses all expressing,
But 'tis too short a blessing,
And love too long a pain.

'Tis easy to deceive us
In pity of your pain,
But when we love you leave us
To rail at you in vain.
Before we have described it,
There is no bliss beside it,
But she that once has tried it,
Will never love again.

The passion you pretended
Was only to obtain,
But when the charm is ended
The charmer you disdain.
Your love by ours we measure
Till we have lost our treasure,
But dying is a pleasure,
When living is a pain.

JOHN DRYDEN

O NEVER SAY THAT I WAS
FALSE OF HEART

O NEVER say that I was false of heart,
Though absence seem'd my flame to qualify!
As easy might I from myself depart,
As from my soul, which in thy breast doth lie:
That is my home of love; if I have ranged,
Like him that travels I return again,
Just to the time, not with the time exchanged,
So that myself bring water for my stain.

Never believe, though in my nature reign'd
All frailties that besiege all kinds of blood,
That it could so prepost'rously be stain'd,
To leave for nothing all thy sum of good:
For nothing this wide Universe I call,
Save thou, my Rose; in it thou art my all.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER

It is the miller's daughter,
And she is grown so dear, so dear,
That I would be the jewel
That trembles in her ear:
For hid in ringlets day and night,
I'd touch her neck so warm and white.

And I would be the girdle
About her dainty dainty waist,
And her heart would beat against me,
In sorrow and in rest:
And I should know if it beat right,
I'd clasp it round so close and tight.

And I would be the necklace,
And all day long to fall and rise
Upon her balmy bosom,
With her laughter or her sighs:
And I would lie so light, so light,
I scarce should be unclasp'd at night.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

FAIR IS MY LOVE

FAIR is my Love and cruel as she's fair;
Her brow-shades frown, although her eyes are sunny.
Her smiles are lightning, though her pride despair,
And her disdains are gall, her favours honey:
A modest maid, deck'd with a blush of honour,
Whose feet do tread green paths of youth and love;
The wonder of all eyes that look upon her,
Sacred on earth, design'd a Saint above.
Chastity and Beauty, which were deadly foes,
Live reconcil'd friends within her brow;
And had she Pity to conjoin with those,
Then who had heard the plaints I utter now?
For had she not been fair, and thus unkind,
My Muse had slept, and none had known my mind.

SAMUEL DANIEL

LET ME NOT TO THE
MARRIAGE OF TRUE MINDS

LET me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O, no! it is an ever-fix'd mark,
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wand'ring bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.

Love

Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom:—
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

ONE DAY I WROTE HER NAME

ONE day I wrote her name upon the strand,
But came the waves and washèd it away:
Again I wrote it with a second hand,
But came the tide and made my pains his prey.
"Vain man," said she, "that dost in vain essay
A mortal thing so to immortalize;
For I myself shall like to this decay,
And eke my name be wipèd out likewise."

"Not so," quoth I; "let baser things devise
To die in dust, but you shall live by fame;
My verse your virtues rare shall eternize,
And in the heavens write your glorious name:
Where, whenas Death shall all the world subdue,
Our love shall live, and later life renew."

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EDMUND SPENSER

A MODEST LOVE

THE lowest trees have tops, the ant here gall,
The fly her spleen, the little sparks their heat;
The slender hairs cast shadows, though but small,
And bees have stings, although they be not great;
Seas have their source, and so have shallow springs;
And love is love, in beggars as in kings.

Where rivers smoothest run, deep are the fords;
The dial stirs, yet none perceives it move;
The firmest faith is in the fewest words;
The turtles cannot sing, and yet they love:
True hearts have eyes and ears, no tongues to speak;
They hear and see, and sigh, and then they break.

SIR EDWARD DYER

MAUD

COME into the garden, Maud,
For the black bat, night, has flown,
Come into the garden, Maud,
I am here at the gate alone;
And the woodbine spices are wafted abroad,
And the musk of the roses blown.

For a breeze of morning moves,
And the planet of Love is on high,
Beginning to faint in the light that she loves
On a bed of daffodil sky,
To faint in the light of the sun she loves,
To faint in his light, and to die.

All night have the roses heard
 The flute, violin, bassoon;
 All night has the casement jessamine stirr'd
 To the dancers dancing in tune;
 Till a silence fell with the waking bird,
 And a hush with the setting moon.

I said to the lily, "There is but one
 With whom she has heart to be gay.
 When will the dancers leave her alone?
 She is weary of dance and play."
 Now half to the setting moon are gone,
 And half to the rising day;
 Low on the sand and loud on the stone
 The last wheel echoes away.

I said to the rose, "The brief night goes
 In babble and revel and wine.
 O young lord-lover, what sighs are those,
 For one that will never be thine?
 But mine, but mine," so I swear to the rose,
 "For ever and ever, mine."/

And the soul of the rose went into my blood,
 As the music clash'd in the hall;
 And long by the garden lake I stood,
 For I heard your rivulet fall
 From the lake to the meadow and on to the wood,
 Our wood, that is dearer than all;

From the meadow your walks have left so sweet
 That whenever a March-wind sighs
 He sets the jewel-print of your feet
 In violers blue as your eyes,
 To the woody hollows in which we meet
 And the valleys of Paradise.

Love

The slender acacia would not shake
One long milk-bloom on the tree;
The white lake-blossom fell into the lake,
As the pimpernel dozed on the lea;
But the rose was awake all night for your sake,
Knowing your promise to me;
The lilies and roses were all awake,
They sigh'd for the dawn and thee.

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,
Come hither, the dances are done,
In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,
Queen lily and rose in one;
Shine out, little head, sunning over with curls,
To the flowers, and be their sun.

There has fallen a splendid tear
From the passion-flower at the gate.
She is coming, my dove, my dear;
She is coming, my life, my fate;
The red rose cries, "She is near, she is near;"
And the white rose weeps, "She is late;"
The larkspur listens, "I hear, I hear;"
And the lily whispers, "I wait."

She is coming, my own, my sweet;
Were it ever so airy a tread,
My heart would hear her and beat,
Were it earth in an earthly bed;
My dust would hear her and beat,
Had I lain for a century dead;
Would start and tremble under her feet,
And blossom in purple and red.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

AS THRO' THE LAND AT EVE
WE WENT

As thro' the land at eve we went,
And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,
We fell out, my wife and I,
O we fell out I know not why,
And kiss'd again with tears.
And blessings on the falling out
That all the more endears,
When we fall out with those we love
And kiss again with tears!
For when we came where lies the child
We lost in other years,
There above the little grave,
O there above the little grave,
We kiss'd again with tears.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

TO LUCASTA,
ON GOING TO THE WARS

TELL me not, Sweet, I am unkind
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast, and quiet mind,
To war and arms I fly.

True, a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field;
And with a stronger faith embrace
A sword, a horse, a shield.

Love

Yet this inconstancy is such
As you too shall adore;
I could not love thee, Dear, so much,
Loved I not honor more.

RICHARD LOVELACE

TO ALTHEA FROM PRISON

WHEN Love with unconfined wings
Hovers within my gates,
And my divine Althea brings
To whisper at the grates;
When I lie tangled in her hair
And fetter'd to her eye,
The birds that wanton in the air
Know no such liberty.

When flowing cups run swiftly round
With no allaying Thames,
Our careless heads with roses bound,
Our hearts with loyal flames;
When thirsty grief in wine we steep,
When healths and draughts go free—
Fishes that tipple in the deep
Know no such liberty.

When, like committed linnets, I
With shriller throat shall sing
The sweetness, mercy, majesty,
And glories of my King;
When I shall voice aloud how good
He is, how great should be,

Enlargèd winds, that curl the flood,
Know no such liberty.

Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for an hermitage;
If I have freedom in my love
And in my soul am free, '
Angels alone, that soar above,
Enjoy such liberty.

RICHARD LOVELACE

From LOVE IN THE VALLEY

UNDER yonder beech-tree single on the green-sward,
Couch'd with her arms behind her golden head,
Knees and tresses folded to slip and ripple idly,
Lies my young love sleeping in the shade.
Had I the heart to slide an arm beneath her,
Press her parting lips, as her waist I gather slow,
Waking in amazement she could not but embrace me:
Then would she hold me and never let me go?

Shy as the squirrel and wayward as the swallow,
Swift as the swallow along the river's light
Circling the surface to meet his mirror'd winglets,
Fleeter she seems in her stay than in her flight.
Shy as the squirrel that leaps among the pine-tops,
Wayward as the swallow overhead at set of sun,
She whom I love is hard to catch and conquer,
Hard, but O the glory of the winning were she won!

Love

When her mother tends her before the laughing mirror,
Tying up her laces, looping up her hair,
Often she thinks, were this wild thing wedded,
More love should I have, and much less care.
When her mother tends her before the lighted mirror,
Loosening her laces, combing down her curls,
Often she thinks, were this wild thing wedded,
I should miss but one for many boys and girls.

Heartless she is as the shadow in the meadows
Flying to the hills on a blue and breezy noon.
No, she is athirst and drinking up her wonder:
Earth to her is young as the slip of the new moon.
Deals she an unkindness, 'tis but her rapid measure,
Even as in a dance; and her smile can heal no less:
Like the swinging May-cloud that pelts the flowers with
hailstones
Off a sunny border, she was made to bruise and bless.

Lovely are the curves of the white owl sweeping
Wavy in the dusk lit by one large star.
Lone on the fir-branch, his rattle-note unvaried,
Brooding o'er the gloom, spins the brown evejar.
Darker grows the valley, more and more forgetting:
So were it with me if forgetting could be will'd.
Tell the grassy hollow that holds the bubbling well-
spring,
Tell it to forget the source that keeps it fill'd.

Stepping down the hill with her fair companions,
Arm in arm, all against the raying West,
Boldly she sings, to the merry tune she marches,
Brave is her shape, and sweeter unpossess'd.
Sweeter, for she is what my heart first awaking
Whisper'd the world was; morning light is she.

Love that so desires would fain keep her changeless;
Fain would fling the net, and fain have her free.

Happy happy time, when the white star hovers
Low over dim fields fresh with bloomy dew,
Near the face of dawn, that draws athwart the darkness,
Threading it with colour, like yewberries the yew.
Thicker crowd the shades as the grave East deepens
Glowing, and with crimson a long cloud swells.
Maiden still the morn is; and strange she is, and secret;
Strange her eyes; her cheeks are cold as cold sea-shells.

.

Mother of the dews, dark eye-lash'd twilight,
Low-lidded twilight, o'er the valley's brim,
Rounding on thy breast sings the dew-delighted skylark,
Clear as though the dewdrops had their voice in him.
Hidden where the rose-tussock drinks the rayless planet,
Fountain-full he pours the spraying fountain-showers.
Let me hear her laughter, I would have her ever
Cool as dew in twilight, the lark above the flowers.

All the girls are out with their baskets for the primrose;
Up lanes, woods through, they troop in joyful bands.
My sweet leads: she knows not why, but now she loiters,
Eyes the bent anemones, and hangs her hands.
Such a look will tell that the violets are peeping,
Coming the rose: and unaware a cry
Springs in her bosom for odours and for colour,
Covert and the nightingale; she knows not why.

.

Hither she comes; she comes to me; she lingers,
Deepens her brown eyebrows, while in new surprise

Love

High rise the lashes in wonder of a stranger;
Yet am I the light and living of her eyes.
Something friends have told her fills her heart to brim-
ming,
Nets her in her blushes, and wounds her, and tames.—
Sure of her haven, O like a dove alighting,
Arms up, she dropp'd: our souls were in our names.

Could I find a place to be alone with heaven,
I would speak my heart out: heaven is my need.
Every woodland tree is flushing like the dogwood,
Flashing like the whitebeam, swaying like the reed.
Flushing like the dogwood crimson in October;
Streaming like the flag-reed South-West blown;
Flashing as in gusts the sudden-lighted whitebeam:
All seem to know what is for heaven alone.

GEORGE MEREDITH

When the Sun is

WHEN TO THE SESSIONS OF SWEET SILENT THOUGHT

WHEN to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes now wail my dear time's waste:
Then can I drown an eye, unus'd to flow,
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
And weep afresh love's long since cancell'd woe,
And moan th' expense of many a vanish'd sight:

Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-beinoaned moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before.
But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
All losses are restor'd and sorrows end.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

WHERE LATE THE SWEET
BIRDS SANG

THAT time of year thou mayst in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
As after sunset fadeth in the west,
Which by and by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.

In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire,
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
As the death-bed whereon it must expire,
Consum'd with that which it was nourish'd by.
This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong,
To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

LOVE IN MY BOSOM
LIKE A BEE

Love in my bosom like a bee
Doth suck his sweet;
Now with his wings he plays with me,
Now with his feet.
Within mine eyes he makes his nest,
His bed amidst my tender breast;
My kisses are his daily feast,
And yet he robs me of my rest.
Ah wanton, will ye?

And if I sleep, then percheth he,
With pretty flight,
And makes his pillow of my knee
The livelong night.
Strike I my lute, he tunes the string;
He music plays if so I sing;
He lends me every lovely thing;
Yet cruel he my heart doth sting.
Whist, wanton, still ye!

Else I with roses every day
Will whip you hence,
And bind you, when you long to play,
For your offence.
I'll shut mine eyes to keep you in,
I'll make you fast it for your sin,
I'll count your power not worth a pin.
Alas, what hereby shall I win,
If he gainsay me?

What if I heat the wanton boy
With many a rod?
He will repay me with annoy,
Because a god
Then sit thou safely on my knee,
Then let thy bower my bosom be;
Lurk in mine eyes, I like of thee.
O Cupid, so thou pity me,
Spare not, but play thee.

THOMAS LODGE

CUPID AND CAMPASPE

CUPID and my Campaspe play'd
At cards for kisses—Cupid paid:
He stakes his quiver, bow, and arrows,
His mother's doves, and team of sparrows;
Loses them too; then down he throws
The coral of his lip, the rose
Growing on's cheek (but none knows how);
With these, the crystal of his brow,
And then the dimple on his chin:
All these did my Campaspe win.
At last he set her both his eyes—
She won, and Cupid blind did rise.
O Love! has she done this to thee?
What shall, alas! become of me?

JOHN LYLY
357

THE PASSIONATE SHEPHERD
TO HIS LOVE

COME live with me and be my love,
And we will all the pleasures prove
That valleys, groves, hills, and fields,
Woods, or steepy mountain yields.

And we will sit upon the rocks,
Seeing the shepherds feed their flocks,
By shallow rivers to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

And I will make thee beds of roses
And a thousand fragrant posies,
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle
Embroidered all with leaves of myrtle;

A gown made of the finest wool
Which from our pretty lambs we pull;
Fair lined slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold;

A belt of straw and ivy buds,
With coral clasps and amber studs:
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me, and be my love.

The shepherds' swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May morning:
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me and be my love.

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE

THE NYMPH'S REPLY TO
THE SHEPHERD

If all the world and love were young,
And truth in every shepherd's tongue,
These pretty pleasures might me move
To live with thee and be thy love.

Time drives the flocks from field to fold
When rivers rage and rocks grow cold,
And Philomel becometh dumb;
The rest complains of cares to come.

The flowers do fade, and wanton fields
To wayward winter reckoning yields;
A honey tongue, a heart of gall,
Is fancy's spring, but sorrow's fall.

Thy gowns, thy shoes, thy beds of roses,
Thy cap, thy kirtle, and thy posies
Soon break, soon wither, soon forgotten,—
In folly ripe, in reason rotten.

Thy belt of straw and ivy buds,
Thy coral clasps and amber studs,
All these in me no means can move
To come to thee and be thy love.

But could youth last and love still breed,
Had joys no date nor age no need,
Then these delights my mind might move
To live with thee and be thy love.

HOW LIKE A WINTER

How like a winter hath my absence been
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year!
What freezings have I felt, what dark days seen!
What old December's bareness everywhere!
And yet this time remov'd was summer's time,
The teeming autumn, big with rich increase,
Bearing the wanton burden of the prime,
Like widow'd wombs after their lords' decease:
Yet this abundant issue seem'd to me
But hope of orphans and unfather'd fruit;
For summer and his pleasures wait on thee,
And, thou away, the very birds are mute:
Or, if they sing, 'tis with so dull a cheer,
That leaves look pale, dreading the winter's near.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

HOW DO I LOVE THEE?

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.
I love thee to the level of everyday's
Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.

I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints—I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life!—and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

FAREWELL! THOU ART
TOO DEAR

FAREWELL! thou art too dear for my possessing,
And like enough thou know'st thy estimate:
The charter of thy worth gives thee releasing;
My bonds in thee are all determinate.
For how do I hold thee but by thy granting?
And for that riches where is my deserving?
The cause of this fair gift in me is wanting,
And so my patent back again is swerving.

Thyself thou gav'st, thy own worth then not knowing,
Or me, to whom thou gav'st it, else mistaking;
So thy great gift, upon misprision growing,
Comes home again, on better judgment making.
Thus have I had thee, as a dream doth flatter
In sleep a King; but waking, no such matter.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

LOVE'S DEITY

I LONG to talk with some old lover's ghost,
 Who died before the god of love was born:
 I cannot think that he, who then loved most,
 Sunk so low, as to love one which did scorn.
 But since this god produced a destiny,
 And that vice-nature, custom, lets it be;
 I must love her, that loves not me.

Sure, they which made him god, meant not so much,
 Nor he in his young godhead practised it;
 But when an even flame two hearts did touch,
 His office was indulgently to fit
 Actives to passives. Correspondency
 Only his subject was; it cannot be
 Love, till I love her, that loves me.

But every modern god will now extend
 His vast prerogative, as far as Jove.
 To rage, to lust, to write to, to commend,
 All is the purlieu of the god of love.
 Oh were we wakened by this tyranny
 To ungod this child again, it could not be
 I should love her, who loves not me.

Rebel and atheist too, why murmur I,
 As though I felt the worst that love could do?
 Love might make me leave loving, or might try
 A deeper plague, to make her love me too,
 Which, since she loves before, I am loath to see;
 Falsehood is worse than hate; and that must be,
 If she whom I love, should love me.

JOHN DONNE

WHO EVER LOVED, THAT
LOVED NOT AT FIRST SIGHT?

It lies not in our power to love or hate,
For will in us is overruled by fate.
When two are stripped, long ere the course begin,
We wish that one should lose, the other win;
And one especially do we affect
Of two gold ingots, like in each respect:
The reason no man knows; let it suffice
What we behold is censured by our eyes.
Where both deliberate, the love is slight:
Who ever loved, that loved not at first sight?

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE

IF THOU MUST LOVE ME

If thou must love me, let it be for naught
Except for love's sake only. Do not say,
"I love her for her smile—her look—her way
Of speaking gently,—for a trick of thought
That falls in well with mine, and certes brought
A sense of pleasant ease on such a day"—
For these things in themselves, Belovèd, may
Be changed, or change for thee—and love, so wrought,
May be unwrought so. Neither love me for
Thine own dear pity's wiping my cheeks dry:
A creature might forget to weep, who bore
Thy comfort long, and lose thy love thereby!
But love me for love's sake, that evermore
Thou mayst love on, through love's eternity.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

THE EXPENSE OF SPIRIT

THE expense of spirit in a waste of shame
Is lust in action; and till action, lust
Is perjur'd, murd'rous, bloody, full of blame,
Savage, extreme, rude, cruel, not to trust;
Enjoy'd no sooner but despised straight;
Past reason hunted, and no sooner had,
Past reason hated, as a swallowed bait
On purpose laid to make the taker mad;

Mad in pursuit and in possession so;
Had, having, and in quest to have, extreme;
A bliss in proof, and prov'd, a very woe;
Before, a joy propos'd; behind, a dream.
All this the world well knows; yet none knows well
To shun the heaven that leads men to this hell.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

THE CANONIZATION

For God sake hold your tongue, and let me love,
Or chide my palsy, or my gout,
My five gray hairs, or ruined fortune flout,
With wealth your state, your mind with arts improve,
Take you a course, get you a place,
Observe his honor, or his grace,
Or the king's real, or his stamp'd face

Contemplate, what you will approve,
So you will let me love.

Alas, alas, who's injured by my love?
What merchant's ships have my sighs drowned?
Who says my tears have overflowed his ground?
When did my colds a forward spring remove?
When did the heats which my veins fill
Add one more to the plaguey bill?
Soldiers find wars, and lawyers find out still
Litigious men, which quarrels move,
Though she and I do love.

Call us what you will, we are made such by love;
Call her one, me another sly,
We are tapers too, and at our own cost die,
And we in us find the eagle and the dove.
The phoenix riddle hath more wit
By us, we two being one, are it.
So to one neutral thing both sexes fit,
We die and rise the same, and prove
Mysterious by this love.

We can die by it, if not live by love,
And if unfit for tombs and hearse
Our legend be, it will be fit for verse;
And if no piece of chronicle we prove,
We'll build in sonnets pretty rooms;
As well a well-wrought urn becomes
The greatest ashes, as half-acre tombs,
And by these hymns, all shall approve
Us *canonized* for love:

And thus invoke us; you whom reverend love
Made one another's hermitage;

Love

You, to whom love was peace, that now is rage;
Who did the whole world's soul contract, and drove
Into the glasses of your eyes
(So made such mirrors, and such spies,
That they did all to you epitomize),
Countries, towns, courts: beg from above
A pattern of your love!

JOHN DONNE

FULL MANY A GLORIOUS
MORNING HAVE I SEEN

FULL many a glorious morning have I seen
Flatter the mountain-tops with sovereign eye,
Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy;
Anon permit the basest clouds to ride
With ugly rack on his celestial face,
And from the forlorn world his visage hide,
Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace.

Even so my sun one early morn did shine
With all-triumphant splendor on my brow;
But, out! alack! he was but one hour mine,
The region-cloud hath mask'd him from me now.
Yet him for this my love no whit disdaineth;
Suns of the world may stain when heaven's sun staineth.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

SHALL I COMPARE THEE TO A SUMMER'S DAY?

SHALL I compare thee to a summer's day?
 Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
 Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
 And summer's lease hath all too short a date;
 Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
 And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
 And every fair from fair sometime declines,
 By chance, or nature's changing course untrimm'd:
 But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
 Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st,
 Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
 When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st;
 So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
 So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

THE ECSTASY

WHERE, like a pillow on a bed,
 A pregnant bank swelled up to rest
 The violet's reclining head,
 Sat we two, one another's best.
 Our hands were firmly cemented
 With a fast balm, which thence did spring;
 Our eye-beams twisted, and did thread
 Our eyes upon one double string;
 So to'entergraft our hands, as yet
 Was all the means to make us one,

And pictures in our eyes to get
Was all our propagation.
As 'twixt two equal armies fate
Suspends uncertain victory,
Our souls, which to advance their state
Were gone out, hung 'twixt her and me.
And whilst our souls negotiate there,
We like sepulchral statues lay;
All day, the same our postures were,
And we said nothing, all the day.
If any, so by love refined
That he soul's language understood,
And by good love were grown all mind,
Within convenient distance stood,
He, though he knew not which soul spake,
Because both meant, both spake the same,
Might thence a new concoction take
And part far purer than he came.
This ecstasy doth unperplex,
We said, and tell us what we love:
We see by this it was not sex,
We see we saw not what did move;
But as all several souls contain
Mixture of things, they know not what,
Love these mixed souls doth mix again
And makes both one, each this and that.
A single violet transplant,
The strength, the color, and the size,
All which before was poor and scant,
Redoubles still, and multiplies.
When love with one another so
Interinanimates two souls,
That abler soul, which thence doth flow,
Defects of loneliness controls.
We then, who are this new soul, know

Of what we are composed and made,
For th' atomies of which we grow
Are souls, whom no change can invade.
But oh, alas, so long, so far,
Our bodies why do we forbear?
They are ours, though not we; we are
The intelligences, they the sphere.
We owe them thanks, because they thus
Did us to us at first convey,
Yielded their forces, sense, to us,
Nor are dross to us, but allay.
On man heaven's influence works not so,
But that it first imprints the air; "
For soul into the soul may flow,
Though it to body first repair,
As our blood labors to beget
Spirits, as like souls as it can,
Because such fingers need to knit
That subtle knot which makes us man,
So must pure lovers' souls descend
To affections, and to faculties,
Which sense may reach and apprehend,
Else a great prince in prison lies.
To our bodies turn we then, that so
Weak men on love revealed may look;
Love's mysteries in souls do grow,
But yet the body is his book.
And if some lover, such as we,
Have heard this dialogue of one,
Let him still mark us, he shall see
Small change when we are to bodies gone.

JOHN DONNE

THE SUN RISING

Busy old fool, unruly Sun,
Why dost thou thus,
Through windows, and through curtains, call on us?
Must to thy motions lovers' seasons run?
Saucy pedantic wretch, go chide
Late school-boys and sour prentices,
Go tell court-huntsmen that the king will ride,
Call country ants to harvest offices;
Love, all alike, no season knows nor clime,
Nor hours, days, months, which are the rags of time.

Thy beams so reverend and strong
Why shouldst thou think?
I could eclipse and cloud them with a wink,
But that I would not lose her sight so long.
If her eyes have not blinded thine,
Look, and to-morrow late tell me,
Whether both th' Indias of spice and mine
Be where thou left'st them, or lie here with me.
Ask for those kings whom thou saw'st yesterday,
And thou shalt hear, "All here in one bed lay."

She's all states, and all princes I;
Nothing else is;
Princes do but play us; compared to this,
All honor's mimic, all wealth alchemy.
Thou? Sun, art half as happy as we,
In that the world's contracted thus;
Thine age asks ease, and since thy duties be
To warm the world, that's done in warming us.
Shine here to us, and thou art everywhere;
This bed thy center is, these walls thy sphere.

JOHN DONNE

LOVE IS A SICKNESS

LOVE is a sickness full of woes,
All remedies refusing;
A plant that most with cutting grows,
Most barren with best using.

Why so?
More we enjoy it, more it dies;
If not enjoyed, it sighing cries
Heigh-hol

Love is a torment of the mind,
A tempest everlasting;
And Jove hath made it of a kind,
Not well, nor full, nor fasting.

Why, so?
More we enjoy it, more it dies;
If not enjoyed, it sighing cries
Heigh-hol

SAMUEL DANIEL

WHEN IN DISGRACE WITH FORTUNE AND MEN'S EYES

WHEN in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes
I all alone beweepe my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself, and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featur'd like him, like him with friends possess'd,

Love

Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least:
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
Haply I think on thee,—and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;
For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

THE RELIC

WHEN my grave is broke up again
Some second guest to entertain,
—For graves have learn'd that woman-head,
To be to more than one a bed—
And he that digs it, spies
A bracelet of bright hair about the bone,
Will not he let us alone,
And think that there a loving couple lies,
Who thought that this device might be some way
To make their souls at the last busy day
Meet at this grave, and make a little stay?

If this fall in a time, or land,
Where mass-devotion doth command,
Then he that digs us up will bring
Us to the bishop or the king,
To make us relics; then
Thou shalt be a Mary Magdalen, and I
A something else thereby;

All women should adore us, and some men.
And, since at such time miracles are sought,
I would have that age by this paper taught
What miracles we harmless lovers wrought.

First we loved well and faithfully,
Yet knew not what we loved, nor why;
Difference of sex we never knew,
No more than guardian angels do;
Coming and going we
Perchance might kiss, but not between those meals;
Our hands ne'er touch'd the seals,
Which nature, injured by late law, sets free:
These miracles we did; but now alas!
All measure, and all language, I should pass,
Should I tell what a miracle she was.

JOHN DONNE

DID NOT THE HEAVENLY RHETORIC OF THINE EYE

DID not the heavenly rhetoric of thine eye,
'Gainst whom the world cannot hold argument,
Persuade my heart to this false perjury?
Vows for thee broke deserve not punishment.
A woman I forswore; but I will prove,
Thou being a goddess, I forswore not thee:
My vow was earthly, thou a heavenly love;
Thy grace being gain'd cures all disgrace in me.

Love

Vows are but breath, and breath a vapour is:
Then thou, fair sun, which on my earth dost shine,
Exhalest this vapour-vow; in thee it is:
If broken then, it is no fault of mine:
If by me broke, what fool is not so wise
To lose an oath to win a paradise?

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

WHAT IS YOUR SUBSTANCE?

WHAT is your substance, whereof are you made,
That millions of strange shadows on you tend?
Since every one hath, every one, one shade,
And you, but one, can every shadow lend.
Describe Adonis, and the counterfeit
Is poorly imitated after you;
On Helen's cheek all art of beauty set,
And you in Grecian tires are painted new:

Speak of the spring and plenty of the year,
The one doth shadow of your beauty show,
The other as your bounty doth appear;
And you in every blessed shape we know.
In all external grace you have some part,
But you like none, none you, for constant heart.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

THE FLEA

MARK but this flea, and mark in this,
How little that which thou deny'st me is;
It sucked me first, and now sucks thee,
And in this flea our two bloods mingled be;
Thou know'st that this cannot be said
A sin, nor shame, nor loss of maidenhead;
Yet this enjoys before it woo,
And pamper'd swells with one blood made of two,
And this, alas, is more than we would do.

Oh stay, three lives in one flea spare,
Where we almost, yea, more than married are.
This flea is you and I, and this
Our marriage bed, and marriage temple is;
Though parents grudge, and you, we're met,
And cloistered in these living walls of jet.
Though use make you apt to kill me,
Let not to that, self-murder added be,
And sacrilege, three sins in killing three.

Cruel and sudden, hast thou since
Purpled thy nail in blood of innocence?
Wherein could this flea guilty be,
Except in that drop which it sucked from thee?
Yet thou triumph'st and say'st that thou
Find'st not thyself, nor me the weaker now;
'Tis true, then learn how false fears be:
Just so much honor, when thou yield'st to me,
Will waste, as this flea's death took life from thee.

JOHN DOWNE

THE ROSE LOOKS FAIR

O how much more doth beauty beauteous seem
By that sweet ornament which truth doth give!
The rose looks fair, but fairer we it deem
For that sweet odor which doth in it live.
The canker-blooms have full as deep a dye
As the perfumèd tincture of the roses,
Hang on such thorns, and play as wantonly
When summer's breath their maskèd buds discloses;
But—for their virtue only is their show—
They live unwooed and unrespected fade,
Die to themselves. Sweet roses do not so;
Of their sweet deaths are sweetest odors made.
And so of you, beauteous and lovely youth,
When that shall fade, my verse distils your truth.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

THE GOOD-MORROW

I WONDER by my troth what thou and I
Did till we loved? were we not weaned till then?
But sucked on country pleasures childishy?
Or snorted we in the seven sleepers' den?
'Twas so; but this, all pleasures fancies be.
If ever any beauty I did see,
Which I desired, and got, 'twas but a dream of thee.

And now good morrow to our waking souls,
Which watch not one another out of fear;
For love all love of other sights controls,
And makes one little room an everywhere.

Love

Let sea-discoverers to new worlds have gone,
Let maps to other, worlds on worlds have shown;
Let us possess one world, each hath one, and is one.

My face in thine eye, thine in mine appears,
And true plain hearts do in the faces rest;
Where can we find two better hemispheres
Without sharp north, without declining west?
Whatever dies was not mixed equally;
If our two loves be one, or thou and I
Love so alike that none do slacken, none can die.

JOHN DONNE

TIRED WITH ALL THESE

TIRED with all these, for restful death I cry—
As, to behold desert a beggar born,
And needy nothing trimm'd in jollity,
And purest faith unhappily forsworn,
And gilded honor shamefully misplaced,
And maiden virtue rudely strumpeted,
And right perfection wrongfully disgraced,
And strength by limping sway disabled,
And art made tongue-tied by authority,
And folly, doctor-like, controlling skill,
And simple truth miscall'd simplicity,
And captive Good attending captain Ill:
Tired with all these, from these would I be gone,
Save that, to die, I leave my Love alone.

THE NIGHTINGALE,
AS SOON AS APRIL BRINGETH

THE nightingale, as soon as April bringeth
Unto her rested sense a perfect waking,
While late-bare earth, proud of new clothing, springeth,
Sings out her woes, a thorn her song-book making:
And mournfully bewailing,
Her throat in tunes expresseth
What grief her breast oppresseth
For Tereus' force on her chaste will prevailing.

O Philomela fair, O take some gladness,
That here is juster cause of plaintful sadness:
Thine earth now springs, mine fadeth;
Thy thorn without, my thorn my heart invadeth.

Alas, she hath no other cause of anguish
But Tereus' love, on her by strong hand wroken.
Wherein she suffering, all her spirits languish,
Full womanlike complains her will was broken.
But I, who, daily craving,
Cannot have to content me,
Have more cause to lament me,
Since wanting is more woe than too much having.

O Philomela fair, O take some gladness
That here is juster cause of plaintful sadness:
Thine earth now springs, mine fadeth;
Thy thorn without, my thorn my heart invadeth.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

SONNET

WHAT lips my lips have kissed, and where, and why,
I have forgotten, and what arms have lain
Under my head till morning; but the rain
Is full of ghosts to-night, that tap and sigh
Upon the glass and listen for reply,
And in my heart there stirs a quiet pain
For unremembered lads that not again
Will turn to me at midnight with a cry.

Thus in the winter stands the lonely tree,
Nor knows what birds have vanished one by one,
Yet knows its boughs more silent than before:
I cannot say what loves have come and gone,
I only know that summer sang in me
A little while, that in me sings no more.

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

TO THE MOON

WITH how sad steps, O Moon, thou climb'st the skies!
How silently, and with how wan a face!
What, may it be, that e'en in heavenly place
That busy archer his sharp arrows tries?
Sure, if that long-with-love-acquainted eyes
Can judge of love, thou feel'st a lover's case:
I read it in thy looks; thy languished grace,
To me, that feel the like, thy state describes.

Love

Then, even of fellowship, O Moon, tell me,
Is constant love deemed there but want of wit?
Are beauties there as proud as here they be?
Do they above love to be loved, and yet
Those lovers scorn whom that love doth possess?
Do they call virtue, there, ungratefulness?

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

WHEN IN THE CHRONICLE
OF WASTED TIME

WHEN in the chronicle of wasted time
I see descriptions of the fairest wights,
And beauty making beautiful old rime,
In praise of ladies dead and lovely knights;
Then, in the blazon of sweet beauty's best,
Of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow,
I see their antique pen would have express'd
Even such a beauty as you master now.

So all their praises are but prophecies
Of this our time, all you prefiguring;
And, for they look'd but with divining eyes,
They had not skill enough your worth to sing;
For we, which now behold these present days,
Have eyes to wonder, but lack tongues to praise.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

THE PHŒNIX AND
THE TURTLE

LET the bird of loudest lay
On the sole Arabian tree,
Herald sad and trumpet be,
To whose sound chaste wings obey.

But thou shrieking harbinger,
Foul precurrer of the fiend,
Angur of the fever's end,
To this troop come thou not near.

From this session interdict
Every fowl of tyrant wing
Save the eagle, feathered king.
Keep the obsequy so strict.

Let the priest in surplice white
That defunctive music can,
Be the death-divining swan,
Lest the requiem lack his right

And thou, treble-dated crow,
That thy sable gender mak'st
With the breath thou giv'st and tak'st,
'Mongst our mourners shalt thou go.

Here the anthem doth commence:—
Love and constancy is dead;
Phœnix and the turtle fled
In a mutual flame from hence.

Love

So they loved, as love in twain
Had the essence but in one;
Two distincts, division none;
Number there in love was slain.

Hearts remote, yet not asunder;
Distance, and no space was seen
'Twixt the turtle and his queen.
But in them it were a wonder.

So between them love did shine,
That the turtle saw his right
Flaming in the phoenix' sight;
Either was the other's mine.

Property was thus appalled,
That the self was not the same;
Single nature's double name
Neither two nor one was called.

Reason, in itself confounded.
Saw division grow together;
To themselves yet either neither;
Simple were so well compounded,

That it cried, "How true a twain
Seemeth this concordant one!
Love hath reason, reason none
If what parts can so remain."

Whereupon it made this threne
To the phoenix and the dove.
Co-supremes and stars of love,
As chorus to their tragic scene.

Threnos

Beauty, truth, and rarity,
 Grace in all simplicity,
 Here enclosed in cinders lie.

Death is now the phoenix' nest;
 And the turtle's loyal breast
 To eternity doth rest,

Leaving no posterity:
 'Twas not their infirmity,
 It was married chastity.

Truth may seem, but cannot be;
 Beauty brag, but 'tis not she;
 Truth and beauty buried be.

To this urn let those repair
 That are either true or fair;
 For these dead birds sigh a prayer.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

BRIGHT STAR! WOULD I WERE
 STEADFAST AS THOU ART

BRIGHT star! would I were steadfast as thou art—
 Not in lone splendor hung aloft the night,
 And watching, with eternal lids apart,
 Like Nature's patient, sleepless Eremite,
 The moving waters at their priestlike task
 Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,

Love

Or gazing on the new soft fallen mask
Of snow upon the mountains and the moors—
No—yet still steadfast, still unchangeable.
Pillowed upon my fair love's ripening breast,
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,
Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever—or else swoon to death.

JOHN KEATS

ON HIS MISTRESS

By our first strange and fatal interview,
By all desires which thereof did ensue,
By our long starving hopes, by that remorse
Which my words' masculine persuasive force
Begot in thee, and by the memory
Of hurts which spies and rivals threatened me,
I calmly beg; but by thy father's wrath,
By all pains, which want and divorcement hath,
I conjure thee; and all the oaths which I
And thou have sworn to seal joint constancy,
Here I unswear, and overswear them thus:
Thou shalt not love by ways so dangerous.
Temper, O fair love, love's impetuous rage,
Be my true mistress still, not my feigned page;
I'll go, and by thy kind leave, leave behind
Thee, only worthy to nurse in my mind
Thirst to come back; oh, if thou die before,
My soul from other lands to thee shall soar.
Thy else almighty beauty cannot move
Rage from the seas, nor thy love teach them love,
Nor tame wild Boreas' harshness; thou hast read
How roughly he in pieces shiverèd

Fair Orithea, whom he swore he loved.
Fall ill or good, 'tis madness to have proved
Dangers unurg'd; feed on this flattery,
That absent lovers one in th' other be.
Dissemble nothing, not a boy, nor change
Thy body's habit, nor mind's; be not strange
To thyself only; all will spy in thy face
A blushing womanly discovering grace.
Richly clothed apes are called apes; and as soon
Eclips'd as bright, we call the moon the moon.
Men of France, changeable chameleons,
Spitals of diseases, shops of fashions,
Love's fuelers, and the rightest company
Of players which upon the world's stage be,
Will quickly know thee, and no less, also!
Th' indifferent Italian, as we pass
His warm land, well content to think thee page,
Will hunt thee with such lust and hideous rage
As Lot's fair guests were vexed. But none of these,
Nor spongy hydroptic Dutch shall thee displease,
If thou stay here. Oh, stay herel for, for thee,
England is only a worthy gallery
To walk in expectation, till from thence
Our greatest King call thee to his presence.
When I am gone, dream me some happiness,
Nor let thy looks our long hid love confess,
Nor praise, nor dispraise me, nor bless nor curse
Openly love's force, nor in bed fright thy nurse
With midnight's startings, crying out, Oh, oh,
Nurse, oh, my love is slain, I saw him go
O'er the white Alps alone; I saw him, I,
Assailed, fight, taken, stabbed, bleed, fall, and die.
Augur me better chance, except dread Jove
Think it enough for me to have had thy love.

JOHN DONNE

CRAZY JANE TALKS WITH THE BISHOP

I MET the Bishop on the road
And much said he and I.
"Those breasts are flat and fallen now,
Those veins must soon be dry;
Live in a heavenly mansion,
Not in some foul sty."

"Fair and foul are near of kin,
And fair needs foul," I cried.
"My friends are gone, but that's a truth
Nor grave nor bed denied,
Learned in bodily lowliness
And in the heart's pride.

"A woman can be proud and stiff
When on love intent;
But Love has pitched his mansion in
The place of excrement;
For nothing can be sole or whole
That has not been rent."

W. B. YEATS

LOVE'S INFINITENESS

IF yet I have not all thy love,
Dear, I shall never have it all,
I cannot breathe one other sigh, to move;
Nor can entreat one other tear to fall.

Love

And all my treasure, which should purchase thee,
Sighs, tears, and oaths, and letters I have spent,
Yet no more can be due to me,
Then at the bargain made was meant,
If then thy gift of love were partial,
That some to me, some should to others fall,
Dear, I shall never have thee all.

Or if then thou gavest me all,
All was but all, which thou hadst then,
But if in thy heart, since, there be or shall,
New love created be, by other men,
Which have their stocks entire, and can in tears,
In sighs, in oaths, and letters outbid me,
This new love may beget new fears,
For, this love was not vowed by thee.
And yet it was, thy gift being general,
The ground, thy heart is mine, what ever shall
Grow there, dear, I should have it all.

Yet I would not have all yet,
He that hath all can have no more,
And since my love doth every day admit
New growth, thou shouldst have new rewards in store;
Thou canst not every day give me thy heart,
If thou canst give it, then thou never gavest it:
Love's riddles are, that though thy heart depart
It stays at home, and thou with losing savest it:
But we will have a way more liberal
Than changing hearts, to join them, so we shall
Be one, and one another's all.

JOHN DONNE

THE PARTING

SINCE there's no help, come let us kiss and part—
Nay, I have done, you get no more of me;
And I am glad, yea, glad with all my heart,
That thus so cleanly I myself can free.
Shake hands for ever, cancel all our vows,
And when we meet at any time again,
Be it not seen in either of our brows
That we one jot of former love retain.
Now at the last gasp of Love's latest breath,
When, his pulse failing, Passion speechless lies,
When Faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
And Innocence is closing up his eyes,
—Now if thou wouldst, when all have given him over,
From death to life thou might'st him yet recover.

MICHAEL DRAYTON

THE DREAM

DEAR love, for nothing less than thee
Would I have broke this happy dream;
It was a theme
For reason, much too strong for fantasy.
Therefore thou waked'st me wisely; yet
My dream thou brok'st not, but continued'st it.
Thou art so true that thoughts of thee suffice
To make dreams truths and fables histories;
Enter these arms, for since thou thought'st it best
Not to dream all my dream, let's act the rest

As lightning, or a taper's light,
Thine eyes, and not thy noise, waked me;
Yet I thought thee—
For thou lov'st truth—an angel, at first sight;
But when I saw thou saw'st my heart,
And knew'st my thoughts beyond an angel's art,
When thou knew'st what I dreamt, when thou knew'st
when
Excess of joy would wake me, and cam'st then,
I must confess it could not choose but be
Profane to think thee anything but thee.

Coming and staying show'd thee thee,
But rising makes me doubt that now
That art not thou.
That Love is weak where Fear's as strong as he;
'Tis not all spirit-pure and brave
If mixture it of Fear, Shame, Honor have.
Perchance as torches, which must ready be,
Men light and put out, so thou deal'st with me.
Thou cam'st to kindle, go'st to come; then I
Will dream that hope again, but else would die.

JOHN DONNE

NIGHT AND DAY

DEAR, why should you command me to my rest
When now the night doth summon all to sleep?
Methinks this time becometh lovers best;
Night was ordained together friends to keep.
How happy are all other living things,
Which though the day disjoin by several flight,

Love

The quiet evening yet together brings,
And each returns unto his love at night!
O thou that art so courteous else to all,
Why shouldst thou, Night, abuse me only thus,
That every creature to his kind dost call,
And yet 'tis thou dost only sever us?
Well could I wish it would be ever day,
If, when night comes, you bid me go away.

MICHAEL DRAYTON

LOVE'S PHILOSOPHY

THE fountains mingle with the river
And the rivers with the Ocean,
The winds of Heaven mix for ever
With a sweet emotion;
Nothing in the world is single;
All things by a law divine
In one another's being mingle.
Why not I with thine?—

See the mountains kiss high Heaven
And the waves clasp one another;
No sister flower would be forgiven
If it disdained its brother;
And the sunlight clasps the earth
And the moonbeams kiss the sea:
What are all these kissings worth
If thou kiss not me?

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

MY TRUE LOVE HATH MY HEART

My true love hath my heart, and I have his,
By just exchange one for the other given:
I hold his dear, and mine he cannot miss,
There never was a better bargain driven:
His heart in me keeps me and him in one,
My heart in him his thoughts and senses guides:
He loves my heart, for once it was his own,
I cherish his because in me it bides:

His heart his wound received from my sight.
My heart was wounded with his wounded heart,
For as from me on him his heart did light,
So still methought in me his heart did smart,
Both equal hurt in this change sought our bliss:
My true-love hath my heart, and I have his.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

YE TRADEFUL MERCHANTS

Ye tradeful Merchants, that, with weary toil,
Do seek most precious things to make your gain,
And both the Indias of their treasure spoil,
What needeth you to seek so far in vain?
For lo! my Love doth in herself contain
All this world's riches that may far be found:

Love

If sapphires, lo! her eyes be sapphires plain;
If rubies, lo! her lips be rubies sound;
If pearls, her teeth be pearls, both pure and round;
If ivory, her forehead ivory ween;
If gold, her locks are finest gold on ground;
If silver, her fair hands are silver sheen:
But that which fairest is but few behold:
Her mind, adorned with virtues manifold.

EDMUND SPENSER

BID ADIEU TO MAIDENHOOD

 Bid adieu, adieu, adieu,
 Bid adieu to girlish days,
Happy Love is come to woo
 Thee and woo thy girlish ways—
The zone that doth become thee fair,
The snood upon thy yellow hair,

 "When thou hast heard his name upon
 The bugles of the cherubim
Begin thou softly to unzone
 Thy girlish bosom unto him
And softly to undo the snood
That is the sign of maidenhood

JAMES JOYCE

STRANGE FITS OF PASSION
HAVE I KNOWN

STRANGE fits of passion have I known:
And I will dare to tell,
But in the Lover's ear alone,
What once to me befell.

When she I loved looked every day
Fresh as a rose in June,
I to her cottage bent my way,
Beneath an evening-moon.

Upon the moon I fixed my eye,
All over the wide lea;
With quickening pace my horse drew nigh
Those paths so dear to me.

And now we reached the orchard plot;
And, as we climbed the hill,
The sinking moon to Lucy's cot
Came near, and nearer still.

In one of those sweet dreams I slept,
Kind Nature's gentlest boon!
And all the while my eyes I kept
On the descending moon.

My horse moved on; hoof after hoof
He raised, and never stopped:
When down behind the cottage roof,
At once, the bright moon dropped.

Love

What fond and wayward thoughts will slide
Into a Lover's head!
"O mercy!" to myself I cried,
"If Lucy should be dead!"

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

PROTHALAMION

CALM was the day, and through the trembling air
Sweet-breathing Zephyrus did softly play
A gentle spirit, that lightly did delay
Hot Titan's beams, which then did glister fair;
When I, (whom sullen care,
Through discontent of my long fruitless stay
In Prince's Court, and expectation vain
Of idle hopes, which still do fly away,
Like empty shadows, did afflict my brain,)
Walked forth to ease my pain
Along the shore of silver streaming Thames;
Whose rutty bank, the which his river hems,
Was painted all with variable flowers,
And all the meads adorned with dainty gems
Fit to deck maidens' bowers,
And crown their paramours
Against the bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

There, in a meadow, by the river's side,
A flock of nymphs I chanced to espy,
All lovely daughters of the flood thereby,

With goodly greenish locks, all loose untied,
 As each had been a bride;
 And each one had a little wicker basket,
 Made of the twigs, entrailéd curiously,
 In which they gathered flowers to fill their flasket,
 And with fine fingers cropt full feateously
 The tender stalks on high.
 Of every sort, which in that meadow grew,
 They gathered some; the violet, pallid blue,
 The little daisy, that at evening closes,
 The virgin lily, and the primrose true,
 With store of vermeil roses,
 To deck their bridegrooms' posies
 Against the bridal day, which was not long:
 Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

With that I saw two swans of goodly hue
 Come softly swimming down along the lea;
 Two fairer birds I yet did never see;
 The snow, which doth the top of Pindus strew,
 Did never whiter show;
 Nor Jove himself, when he a swan would be
 For love of Leda, whiter did appear;
 Yet Leda was (they say) as white as he,
 Yet not so white as these, nor nothing near;
 So purely white they were,
 That even the gentle stream, the which them bare,
 Seemed foul to them, and bade his billows spare
 To wet their silken feathers, lest they might
 Soil their fair plumes with water not so fair,
 And mar their beauties bright,
 That shone as heaven's light,
 Against their bridal day, which was not long:
 Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

Love

Eftsoons the Nymphs, which now had flowers their fill,
Ran all in haste to see that silver brood,
As they came floating on the crystal flood;
Whom when they saw, they stood amazed still,
Their wondering eyes to fill;
Them seemed they never saw a sight so fair,
Of fowls, so lovely, that they sure did deem
Them heavenly born, or to be that same pair
Which through the sky draw Venus' silver team;
For sure they did not seem
To be begot of any earthly seed,
But rather angels, or of angels' breed;
Yet were they bred of summer's heat, they say,
In sweetest season, when each flower and weed
The earth did fresh array;
So fresh they seemed as day,
Even as their bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

Then forth they all out of their baskets drew
Great store of flowers, the honour of the field,
That to the sense did fragrant odours yield,
All which upon those goodly birds they threw
And all the waves did strew,
That like old Peneus' waters they did seem,
When down along by pleasant Tempe's shore,
Scattered with flowers, through Thessaly they stream.
That they appear, through lilies' plenteous store,
Like a bride's chamber floor.
Two of those Nymphs, meanwhile, two garlands bound
Of freshest flowers which in that mead they found,
The which presenting all in trim array,
Their snowy foreheads therewithal they crowned,
Whilst one did sing this lay,
396

Prepared against that day,
 Against their bridal day, which was not long:
 Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

“Ye gentle birds! the world’s fair ornament,
 And heaven’s glory, whom this happy hour
 Doth lead unto your lovers’ blissful bower,
 Joy may you have, and gentle heart’s content
 Of your love’s complement;
 And let fair Venus, that is queen of love,
 With her heart-quelling son upon you smile,
 Whose smile, they say, hath virtue to remove
 All Love’s dislike, and friendship’s faulty guile
 For ever to assoil.
 Let endless Peace your steadfast hearts accord,
 And blessed Plenty wait upon your board;
 And let your bed with pleasures chaste abound,
 That fruitful issue may to you afford,
 Which may your foes confound,
 And make your joys redound
 Upon your bridal day, which is not long:
 Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.”

So ended she; and all the rest around
 To her redoubled that her undersong,
 Which said their bridal day should not be long:
 And gentle Echo from the neighbour ground
 Their accents did resound.
 So forth those joyous birds did pass along,
 Adown the lea, that to them murmured low,
 As he would speak, but that he lacked a tongue,
 Yet did by signs his glad affection show,
 Making his stream run slow.

Love

And all the fowl which in his flood did dwell
'Can flock about these twain, that did excel
The rest, so far as Cynthia doth shend
The lesser stars. So they, onrangéd well,
Did on those two attend,
And their best service lend
Against their wedding day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

At length they all to merry London came,
To merry London, my most kindly nurse,
That to me gave this life's first native source,
Though from another place I take my name,
A house of ancient fame:
There when they came, whereas those bricky towers
The which on Thames' broad agéd back do ride,
Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers,
There whilom wont the Templar knights to bide,
Till they decayed through pride:
Next whereunto there stands a stately place,
Where oft I gainéd gifts and goodly grace
Of that great Lord, which therein wont to dwell,
Whose want too well now feels my friendless case;
But ah! here fits not well
Old woes, but joys, to tell
Against the bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

Yet therein now doth lodge a noble peer,
Great England's glory, and the world's wide wonder,
Whose dreadful name late through all Spain did thunder,
And Hercules' two pillars standing near
Did make to quake and fear:
Fair branch of Honour, flower of Chivalry!
Thou fillest England with thy triumph's fame,
398

Joy have thou of thy noble victory,
 And endless happiness of thine own name
 That promiseth the same;
 That through thy prowess, and victorious arms,
 Thy country may be freed from foreign harms;
 And great Eliza's glorious name may ring
 Through all the world, filled with thy wide alarms,
 Which some brave muse may sing
 To ages following
 Upon the bridal day. which is not long:
 Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

From those high towers this noble Lord issuing,
 Like radiant Hesper, when his golden hair
 In th' ocean billows he hath bathéd fair,
 Descended to the river's open viewing,
 With a great train ensuing.
 Above the rest were goodly to be seen
 Two gentle knights of lovely face and feature,
 Beseeming well the bower of any queen,
 With gifts of wit, and ornaments of nature,
 Fit for so goodly stature,
 That like the twins of Jove they seemed in sight,
 Which deck the baldrick of the heavens bright;
 They two, forth pacing to the river's side,
 Received those two fair brides, their love's delight;
 Which, at th' appointed tide,
 Each one did make his bride
 Against their bridal day, which is not long:
 Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

EDMUND SPENSER

Beauty of women

HE JESTS AT SCARS,
THAT NEVER FELT A WOUND

He jests at scars, that never felt a wound.
But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks?
It is the east, and Juliet is the sun!
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,
Who is already sick and pale with grief,
That thou her maid art far more fair than she:
Be not her maid, since she is envious;
Her vestal livery is but sick and green,
And none but fools do wear it; cast it off.
It is my lady; O! it is my love:
O! that she knew she were.
She speaks, yet she says nothing: what of that?
Her eye discourses; I will answer it.
I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks:
Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,
Having some business, do entreat her eyes
To twinkle in their spheres till they return.
What if her eyes were there, they in her head?
The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars
As daylight doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven
Would through the airy region stream so bright
That birds would sing and think it were not night.
See! how she leans her cheek upon her hand:
O! that I were a glove upon that hand,
That I might touch that cheek.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
(from *Romeo and Juliet*)

HELEN

Was this the face that launched a thousand ships,
And burned the topless towers of Ilium?—
Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss!—
Her lips suck forth my soul: see where it flees!—
Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again.
Here will I dwell, for heaven is in these lips,
And all is dross that is not Helena.
I will be Paris, and for love of thee,
Instead of Troy, shall Wittenberg be sacked,
And I will combat with weak Menelaus,
And wear thy colours on my plumèd crest;
Yes, I will wound Achilles in the heel,
And then return to Helen for a kiss.
Oh, thou art fairer than the evening air
Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars;
Brighter art thou than flaming Jupiter
When he appeared to hapless Semele;
More lovely than the monarch of the sky
In wanton Arethusa's azured arms;
And none but thou shalt be my paramour!

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE
(from *Faustus*)

CLEOPATRA

THE barge she sat in, like a burnish'd throne,
Burn'd on the water; the poop was beaten gold,
Purple the sails, and so perfumed, that

Beauty of women

The winds were love-sick with them, the oars were silver,
Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made
The water which they beat to follow faster,
As amorous of their strokes. For her own person,
It beggar'd all description; she did lie
In her pavilion,—cloth-of-gold of tissue,—
O'er-picturing that Venus where we see
The fancy outwork nature; on each side her
Stood pretty-dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,
With divers-colour'd fans, whose wind did seem
To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,
And what they undid did.

Her gentlewomen, like the Nereides
So many mermaids, tended her i' the eyes,
And made their bends adornings; at the helm
A seeming mermaid steers; the silken tackle
Swell with the touches of those flower-soft hands,
That yarely frame the office. From the barge
A strange invisible perfume hits the sense
Of the adjacent wharfs. The city cast
Her people out upon her, and Antony,
Enthron'd i' the market-place, did sit alone,
Whistling to the air; which, but for vacancy,
Had gone to gaze on Cleopatra too
And made a gap in nature.

Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale
Her infinite variety; other women cloy
The appetites they feed, but she makes hungry
Where most she satisfies.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
(from *Antony and Cleopatra*)

WISHES FOR
THE SUPPOSED MISTRESS

WHO'E'ER she be,
That not impossible She'
That shall command my heart and me;

Where'er she lie,
Lock'd up from mortal eye
In shady leaves of destiny:

Till that ripe birth
Of studied Fate stand forth,
And teach her fair steps tread our earth:

Till that divine
Idea take a shrine
Of crystal flesh, through which to shine:

—Meet you her, my Wishes,
Bespeak her to my blisses,
And be ye call'd, my absent kisses.

I wish her beauty,
That owes not all its duty
To 'gaudy tire, or glist'ring shoe-tie:

Something more than
Taffeta or tissue can,
Or rampant feather, or rich fan.

A face, that's best
By its own beauty drest,
And can alone commend the rest.

Beauty of women

A face made up
Out of no other shop
Than what Nature's white hand sets ope.

Days, that need borrow
No part of their good morrow
From a fore-spent night of sorrow:

Days, that in spite
Of darkness, by the light
Of a clear mind are day all night.

Life, that dares send
A challenge to his end,
And when it comes, say, 'Welcome, friend.

Sidneian showers
Of sweet discourse, whose powers
Can crown old Winter's head with flowers,

Soft silken hours,
Open suns, shady bowers;
'Bove all, nothing within that lowers.

Whate'er delight
Can make day's forehead bright,
Or give down to the wings of night.

I wish her store
Of worth may leave her poor
Of wishes; and I wish—no more.

Now, if Time knows
That Her, whose radiant brows
Weave them a garland of my vows;

Beauty of women

Her, that dares be
What these lines wish to see;
I seek no further, it is She.

'Tis She, and here,
Lo! I unclothe and clear
My wishes' cloudy character.

Such worth as this is
Shall fix my flying wishes,
And determine them to kisses.

Let her full glory,
My fancies, fly before ye;
Be ye my fictions—but her story.

RICHARD CRASHAW

RUTH

SHE stood breast-high amid the corn,
Clasp'd by the golden light of morn,
Like the sweetheart of the sun,
Who many a glowing kiss had won.

On her cheek an autumn flush,
Deeply ripen'd;—such a blush
In the midst of brown was born,
Like red poppies grown with corn.

Round her eyes her tresses fell,
Which were blackest none could tell,
But long lashes veil'd a light,
That had else been all too bright.

Beauty of women

And her hat, with shady brim,
Made her tressy forehead dim;
Thus she stood amid the stooks,
Praising God with sweetest looks:—

Sure, I said, Heav'n did not mean,
Where I reap thou shouldst but glean,
Lay thy sheaf adown and come,
Share my harvest and my home.

THOMAS HOOD

TO HELEN

HELEN, thy beauty is to me
Like those Nicean barks of yore,
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
The weary, way-worn wanderer bore
To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy Naiad airs have brought me home
To the glory that was Greece
And the grandeur that was Rome.

Lo, in yon brilliant window-niche
How statue-like I see thee stand,
The agate lamp within thy hand!
Ah, Psyche, from the regions which
Are Holy Land!

EDGAR ALLAN POE

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY

SHE walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellow'd to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impair'd the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent!

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON

BALADE

HYD, Absolon, thy gilte tresses clere;
Ester, ley thou thy meknesse al a-doun;
Hyd, Jonathas, al thy frendly manere;
Penalopee, and Marcia Catoun,
Mak of your wyfhod no comparisoun;

Beauty of women

Hyde ye your beantes, Isoude and Eleyne;
My lady cometh, that al this may disteyne.

Thy faire body, lat hit nat appere,
Lavyne; and thou, Lucesse of Rome toun,
And Polixene, that boghten love so dere,
And Cleopatre, with al thy passioun,
Hyde ye your trouthe of love and your renoun;
And thou, Tisbe, that hast of love swich payne;
My lady cometh, that al this may disteyne.

Herro, Dido, Laudomia, alle y-fere,
And Phyllis, hanging for thy Demophoun,
And Canace, espyed by thy chere,
Ysiphile, betrayed with Jasoun,
Maketh of your trouthe neyther boost ne soun;
Nor Ypermistre or Adriane, ye tveyne;
My lady cometh, that al this may disteyne.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

y-feie] together

THERE BE NONE OF
BEAUTY'S DAUGHTERS

THERE be none of Beauty's daughters
With a magic like thee;
And like music on the waters
Is thy sweet voice to me:
When, as if its sound were causing
The charmed ocean's pausing,
The waves lie still and gleaming,
And the lull'd winds seem dreaming:

Inconstancy

And the midnight moon is weaving
Her bright chain o'er the deep,
Whose breast is gently heaving
As an infant's asleep:
So the spirit bows before thee,
To listen and adore thee;
With a full but soft emotion
Like the swell of Summer's ocean.

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON

GO AND CATCH A FALLING STAR

Go and catch a falling star,
Get with child a mandrake root,
Tell me where all past years are,
Or who cleft the devil's foot,
Teach me to hear mermaids singing,
Or to keep off envy's stinging,
And find
What wind
Serves to advance an honest mind.

If thou beest born to strange sights,
Things invisible to see,
Ride ten thousand days and nights,
Till age snow white hairs on thee,
Thou, when thou return'st, wilt tell me
All strange wonders that befell thee,
And swear
No where
Lives a woman true, and fair.

Inconstancy

If thou find'st one, let me know,
Such a pilgrimage were sweet;
Yet do not, I would not go,
Though at next door we might meet;
Though she were true when you met her,
And till last you write your letter,
Yet she
Will be
False, ere I come, to two or three.

JOHN DONNE

THE MESSAGE

SEND home my long-strayed eyes to me,
Which, oh! too long have dwelt on thee;
Yet since there they have learned such ill,
Such forced fashions
And false passions,
That they be
Made by thee
Fit for no good sight, keep them still.

Send home my harmless heart again,
Which no unworthy thought could stain;
But if it be taught by thine
To make jestings
Of protestings,
And break both
Word and oath,
Keep it, for then 'tis none of mine.

Inconstancy

Yet send me back my heart and eyes,
That I may know and see thy lies,
And may laugh and joy, when thou
Art in anguish
And dost languish
For some one
That will none,
Or prove as false as thou art now.

JOHN DONNE

CHANGE

ALTHOUGH thy hand and faith and good works too,
Have sealed thy love which nothing should undo,
Yea, though thou fall back, that apostasy
Confirm thy love; yet much, much I fear thee.
Women are like the Arts, forced unto none,
Open to all searchers, unprized if unknown.
If I have caught a bird and let him fly,
Another fowler using these means, as I,
May catch the same bird; and, as these things be,
Women are made for men, not him, nor me.
Foxes and goats, all beasts change when they please;
Shall women, more hot, wily, wild than these,
Be bound to one man, and did Nature then
Idly make them apter to endure than men?
They're our clogs, not their own; if a man be
Chained to a galley, yet the galley's free;
Who hath a plough-land casts all his seed corn there,
And yet allows his ground more corn should bear;
Though Danube into the sea must flow,
The sea receives the Rhine, Volga, and Po.

The lasses, O

By nature, which gave it, this liberty
Thou lov'st, but Oh! canst thou love it and me?
Likeness glues love: and if that thou so do,
To make us like and love, must I change too?
More than thy hate, I hate it, rather let me
Allow her change, than change as oft as she,
And so not teach, but force my opinion
To love not any one, nor every one.
To live in one land is captivity,
To run all countries a wild roguery;
Waters stink soon if in one place they bide,
And in the vast sea are more putrefied:
But when they kiss one bunk and, leaving this,
Never look back but the next bank do kiss,
Then are they purest; Change is the nursery
Of music, joy, life and eternity.

JOHN DONNE

GREEN GROW THE RASHES

GREEN grow the rashes, O;
Green grow the rashes, O;
The sweetest hours that e'er I spend,
Are spent among the lasses, O.

There's nought but care on ev'ry han',
In ev'ry hour that passes, O:
What signifies the life o' man,
An 'twere na for the lasses, O.
Green grow, etc.

The lasses, O

The war'ly race may riches chase,
An' riches still may fly them, O;
An' tho' at last they catch them fast,
Their hearts can ne'er enjoy them, O
Green grow, etc.

But gie me a cannie hour at e'en,
My arms about my dearie, O;
An' war'ly cares, an' war'ly men,
May a' gang tupsalteerie, O!
Green grow, etc.

For you sae douce, ye sneer at this;
Ye're nought but senseless asses, O;
The wisest man that war' e'er saw,
He dearly lov'd the lasses, O.
Green grow, etc.

Auld Nature swears, the lovely dears
Her noblest work she classes, O;
Her prentice han' she try'd on man,
An' then she made the lasses, O.
Green grow, etc.

ROBERT BURNS

War'ly] world'ly. Cannie] gentle. 'Tupsalteerie] lopsy-lurvy.
Douce] sober. Birks] birch trees.

ON A GIRDLE

THAT which her slender waist confined
Shall now my joyful temples hind;
No monarch but would give his crown
His arms might do what this has done.

The lasses, O

It was my Heaven's extremest sphere,
The pale which held that lovely deer:
My joy, my grief, my hope, my love,
Did all within this circle move.

A narrow compass! and yet there
Dwelt all that's good, and all that's fair!
Give me but what this ribband bound,
Take all the rest the sun goes round!

EDMUND WALLER

ROSALINE

LIKE to the clear in highest sphere
Where all imperial glory shines,
Of selfsame colour is her hair
Whether unfolded or in twines:
Heigh, ho, fair Rosaline!
Her eyes are sapphires set in snow,
Refining heaven with every wink;
The gods do fear whenas they glow,
And I do tremble when I think
Heigh ho, would she were mine!

Her cheeks are like the blushing cloud
That beautifies Aurora's face,
Or like the silver crimson shroud
That Phœbus' smiling looks doth grace.
Heigh ho, fair Rosaline!
Her lips are like two budded roses
Whom ranks of lilies neighbour nigh,
Within whose bounds she balm encloses

The lasses, O

Apt to entice a deity:
Heigh ho, would she were mine!

Her neck like to a stately tower
Where Love himself imprison'd lies,
To watch for glances every hour
From her divine and sacred eyes:
Heigh ho, fair Rosaline!
Her paps are centres of delight,
Her breasts are orbs of heavenly frame,
Where Nature moulds the dew of light
To feed perfection with the same:
Heigh ho, would she were mine!

With orient pearl, with ruby red,
With marble white, with sapphire blue,
Her body every way is fed,
Yet soft to touch and sweet in view:
Heigh ho, fair Rosaline!
Nature herself her shape admires;
The gods are wounded in her sight;
And Love forsakes his heavenly fires
And at her eyes his brand doth light:
Heigh ho, would she were mine!

Then muse not, Nymphs, though I bemoan
The absence of fair Rosaline,
Since for a fair there's fairer none,
Nor for her virtues so divine:
Heigh ho, fair Rosaline!
Heigh ho, my heart! would God that she were mine!

THOMAS LODGE

The lasses, O

JENNY KISS'D ME

JENNY kiss'd me when we met,
Jumping from the chair she sat in;
Time, you thief, who love to get
Sweets into your list, put that in!
Say I'm weary, say I'm sad,
Say that health and wealth have miss'd me,
Say I'm growing old, but add,
Jenny kiss'd me.

LEIGH HUNT

HE THAT LOVES A ROSY CHEEK

HE that loves a rosy cheek
Or a coral lip admires,
Or from star-like eyes doth seek
Fuel to maintain his fires;
As old Time makes these decay,
So his flames must waste away.

But a smooth and stedfast mind,
Gentle thoughts and calm desires,
Hearts with equal love combined,
Kindle never-dying fires.
Where these are not, I despise
Lovely cheeks or lips or eyes.

THOMAS CAREW
(from *Disdain Returned*)

SHALL I, WASTING IN DESPAIR

SHALL I, wasting in despair,
Die because a woman's fair?
Or make pale my cheeks with care
'Cause another's rosy are?
Be she fairer than the day,
Or the flowery meads in May,
If she be not so to me,
What care I how fair she be?

Should my heart be grieved or pined
'Cause I see a woman kind?
Or a well-disposèd nature
Joinèd with a lovely feature?
Be she meeker, kinder than
Turtle-dove, or pelican,
If she be not so to me,
What care I how kind she be?

Shall a woman's virtues move
Me to perish for her love?
Or her well-deserving, known,
Make me quite forget mine own?
Be she with that goodness blessed
Which may gain her name of best,
If she be not such to me,
What care I how good she be?

'Cause her fortune seems too high,
Shall I play the fool, and die?
Those that bear a noble mind,
Where they want of riches find,
Think what with them they would do

The lasses, O

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Where they want of riches find,
Think what with them they would do

The lasses, O

That without them dare to woo;
And unless that mind I see,
What care I though great she be?

Great, or good, or kind, or fair,
I will ne'er the more despair:
If she love me, this believe,
I will die ere she shall grieve:
If she slight me when I woo, '
I can scorn and let her go;
For if she be not for me,
What care I for whom she be?

GEORGE WITTIER

THE CONSTANT LOVER

Out upon it, I have loved
Three whole days together!
And am like to love three more,
If it prove fair weather.

Time shall moult away his wings
Ere he shall discover
In the whole wide world again
Such a constant lover.

But the spite on't is, no praise
Is due at all to me:
Love with me had made no stays,
Had it any been but she.

The lasses,

Had it any been but she,
And that very face,
There had been at least ere this
A dozen dozer. in her place.

SIR JOHN SUCKLING

WHY SO PALE AND WAN?

Why so pale and wan, fond lover?
Prithee, why so pale?
Will, when looking well can't move her,
Looking ill prevail?
Prithee, why so pale?

Why so dull and mute, young sinner?
Prithee, why so mute?
Will, when speaking well can't win her,
Saying nothing do 't?
Prithee, why so mute?

Quit, quit for shame! This will not move;
This cannot take her.
If of herself she will not love,
Nothing can make her:
The devil take her!

SIR JOHN SUCKLING

The lasses, O

SAINT VALENTINE'S DAY

TO-MORROW is Saint Valentine's day,
All in the morning betimes,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine.

Then up he rose, and donn'd his clothes,
And dupp'd the chamber-door;
Let in the maid, that out a maid
Never departed more.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

TO THE VIRGINS, TO MAKE MUCH OF TIME

GATHER ye rosebuds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying:
And this same flower that smiles to-day
To-morrow will be dying.

The glorious lamp of heaven, the sun,
The higher he's a-getting,
The sooner will his race be run,
And nearer he's to setting.

That age is best which is the first,
When youth and blood are warmer;
But being spent, the worse, and worst
Times still succeed the former.

The lasses, O

Then be not coy, but use your time,
And while ye may, go marry:
For having lost but once your prime,
You may for ever tarry.

ROBERT HERRICK

HEAR, YE LADIES

HEAR, ye ladies that despise
What the mighty Love has done;
Fear examples and be wise:
Fair Callisto was a nun;
Leda, sailing on the stream
To deceive the hopes of man,
Love accounting but a dream,
Doted on a silver swan;
Danaë, in a brazen tower,
Where no love was, loved a shower.

Hear, ye ladies that are coy,
What the mighty Love can do;
Fear the fierceness of the boy:
The chaste Moon he makes to woo;
Vesta, kindling holy fires,
Circled round about with spies,
Never dreaming loose desires,
Doting at the altar dies;
Ilion, in a short hour, higher
He can build, and once more fire.

JOHN FLETCHER

SONG

SYLVIA the fair, in the bloom of fifteen,
Felt an innocent warmth as she lay on the green;
She had heard of a pleasure, and something she guessed
By the towsing and tumbling and touching her breast;
She saw the men eager, but was at a loss
What they meant by their sighing and kissing so close;
By their praying and whining,
And claspings and twining,
And panting and wishing,
And sighing and kissing,
And sighing and kissing so close.

Ah, she cried, ah, for a languishing maid
In a country of Christians to die without aid!
Not a Whig or a Tory or Trimmer at least,
Or a Protestant parson or Catholic priest,
To instruct a young virgin that is at a loss
What they meant by their sighing and kissing so close;
By their praying &c.

Cupid in shape of a swain did appear;
He saw the sad wound, and in pity drew near,
Then showed her his arrow and bid her not fear,
For the pain was no more than a maiden may bear;
When the balm was infused, she was not at a loss
What they meant by their sighing and kissing so close;
By their praying &c.

JOHN DRYDEN

LOVE'S PROGRESS

WHOEVER loves, if he do not propose
 The right true end of love, he's one that goes
 To see for nothing but to make him sick.
 Love is a bear-whelp born, if we o'er-lick
 Our love, and force it new strange shapes to take,
 We err, and of a lump a monster make.
 Were not a calf a monster that were grown
 Faced like a man, though better than his own?
 Perfection is in unity; prefer
 One woman first, and then one thing in her.
 I, when I value gold, may think upon
 The ductileness, the application,
 The wholesomeness, the ingenuity,
 From rust, from soil, from fire ever free:
 But if I love it, 'tis because 'tis made
 By our new nature (Use) the soul of trade.

All these in women we might think upon
 (If women had them) and yet love but one.
 Can men more injure women than to say
 They love for that, by which they're not they?
 Makes virtue women? Must I cool my blood
 Till I both be, and find one, wise and good?
 May barren angels love so. But if we
 Make love to woman, virtue is not she,
 As beauty's not, nor wealth; he that strays thus
 From her to hers is more adulterous
 Than if he took the maid. Search every sphere
 And firmament, our Cupid is not there;
 He's an infernal god, and underground
 With Pluto dwells, where gold and fire abound;
 Men to such gods their sacrificing coals

Sex

Did not in altars lay, but pits and holes.
Although we see the celestial bodies move
Above the earth, the earth we till and love;
So we her airs contemplate, words and heart,
And virtues, but we love the centric part.

Nor is the soul more worthy, or more fit
For love than this, as infinito it is.
But in attaining this desired place
How much they err that set out at the face.
The hair a forest is of ambushes,
Of springs, snares, fetters and manacles;
The brow becalms us when 'tis smooth and plain,
And when 'tis wrinkled shipwrecks us again.
Smooth, 'tis a paradise where we would have
Immortal stay, and wrinkled 'tis our grave.
The nose (like to the first meridian) runs
Not 'twixt an East and West, but 'twixt two suns;
It leaves a cheek, a rosy hemisphere
On either side, and then directs us where
Upon the Islands Fortunate we fall,
(Not faint Canaries, but ambrosial)
Her swelling lips; to which when we are come,
We anchor there and think ourselves at home,
For they seem all; there sirens' songs and there
Wise Delphic oracles to fill the ear,
There in a creek where chosen pearls do swell,
The remora, her cleaving tongue, doth dwell.
These and the glorious promontory, her chin,
O'erpast, and the strait Hellespont between
The Sestos and Abydos of her breasts,
(Not of two lovers, but two loves the nests)
Succeeds a boundless sea, but yet thine eye
Some island moles may scattered there descry,
And sailing toward her India in that way

Shall at her fair Atlantic navel stay;
 Though thence the current be thy pilot made,
 Yet ere thou be where thou wouldst be embayed
 Thou shalt upon another forest set,
 Where many shipwreck and no further get.
 When thou art there, consider what this chase
 Misspent by thy beginning at the face.

Rather set out below; practise my art,
 Some symmetry the foot hath with that part
 Which thou dost seek, and is thy map for that
 Lovely enough to stoop, but not stay at;
 Least subject to disguise and change it is;
 Men say the Devil never can change his.
 It is the emblem that hath figuréd
 Firmness; 'tis the first part that comes to bed.
 Civility we see refined; the kiss
 Which at the face began, transplanted is,
 Since to the hand, since to the Imperial knee,
 Now at the Papal foot delights to be.
 If kings think that the nearer way, and do
 Rise from the foot, lovers may do so too;
 For as free spheres move faster far than can
 Birds, whom the air resists, so may that man
 Which goes this empty and aethereal way,
 Than if at beauty's elements he stay.
 Rich Nature hath in woman wisely made
 Two purses, and their mouths aversely laid;
 They then which to the lower tribute owe,
 That way which that Exchequer looks must go.
 He that doth not, his error is as great
 As who by clyster gave the stomach meat.

JOHN DONNE

I LIKE MY BODY

I LIKE my body when it is with your
body. It is so quite new a thing.
Muscles better and nerves more.
i like my body. i like what it does,
I like its hows. i like to feel the spine
of your body and its bones, and the trembling
—firm-smooth ness and which i will
again and again and again
kiss, i like kissing this and that of you,
i like, slowly stroking the, shocking fuzz
of your electric fur, what-is-it comes
over parting flesh. . . . And eyes big love-crums,

and possibly i like the thrill

of under me you so quite new

E. E. CUMMINGS

GOING TO BED

COME, Madam, come, all rest my powers defy,
Until I labor, I in labor lie.
The foe oft-times having the foe in sight,
Is tired with standing though he never fight.
Off with that girdle, like heaven's zone glittering,
But a far fairer world encompassing.
• Unpin that spangled breastplate which you wear,
That th'eyes of busy fools may be stopped there.
Unlace your self, for that harmonious chime

Tolls me from you that now it is bed time.
 Off with that happy busk, which I envy,
 That still can be, and still can stand so nigh.
 Your gown going off, such beauteous state reveals,
 As when from flowery meads th'hill's shadow steals.
 Off with that wiry coronet and show
 The hairy diadem which on you doth grow:
 Now off with those shoes, and then safely tread
 In this love's hallowed temple, this soft bed.
 In such white robes, heaven's angels used to be
 Received by men; thou angel bringst with thee
 A heaven like Mahomet's paradise; and though
 Ill spirits walk in white, we easily know,
 By this these angels from an evil sprite,
 Those set our hairs, but these our flesh upright.

License my roving hands, and let them go
 Before, behind, between, above, below.
 O my Americal my new-found-land,
 My kingdom, safeliest when with one man manned,
 My mine of precious stones, my Emperie,
 How blest am I in this discovering thee!
 To enter in these bonds, is to be free;
 Then where my hand is set, my seal shall be.

Full nakedness! All joys are due to thee,
 As souls unbodied, bodies unclothed must be,
 To taste whole joys, Gems which you women use
 Are like Atlantus's balls, cast in men's views,
 That when a fool's eye lighteth on a Gem,
 His earthly soul may covet theirs, not them.
 Like pictures, or like books' gay coverings made
 For laymen, are all women thus arrayed;
 Themselves are mystic books, which only we
 (Whom their imputed grace will dignify)
 Must see revealed. Then since that I may know,
 As liberally, as to a midwife, show

Sex

Thy self: cast all, yea, this white linen hence,
There is no penance, much less innocence;
To teach thee, I am naked first; why then
What needst thou have more covering than a man,
JOHN DONNE

DELIGHT IN DISORDER

A SWEET disorder in the dress
Kindles in clothes a wantonness:
A lawn about the shoulders thrown
Into a fine distraction:
An erring lace, which here and there
Enthrals the crimson stomacher:
A cuff neglectful, and thereby
Ribbands to flow confusedly:
A winning wave, deserving note,
In the tempestuous petticoat:
A careless shoe-string, in whose tie
I see a wild civility:
Do more bewitch me than when art
Is too precise in every part.

ROBERT HERRICK

UPON JULIA'S CLOTHES

WHENAS in silks my Julia goes,
Then, then, methinks, how sweetly flows
The liquefaction of her clothes!

Next, when I cast mine eyes and see
That brave vibration each way free,
—O how that glittering taketh me!

ROBERT HERRICK

LONDON SNOW

WHEN men were all asleep the snow came flying,
In large white flakes falling on the city brown,
Stealthily and perpetually settling and loosely lying,
Hushing the latest traffic of the drowsy town;
Deadening, muffling, stifling its murmurs failing;
Lazily and incessantly floating down and down:
Silently sifting and veiling road, roof and railing;
Hiding difference, making unevenness even,
Into angles and crevices softly drifting and sailing.
All night it fell, and when full inches seven
It lay in the depth of its uncompacted lightness,
The clouds blew off from a high and frosty heaven;
And all woke earlier for the unaccustomed brightness
Of the winter dawning, the strange unheavenly glare:
The eye marvelled—marvelled at the dazzling whiteness;
The ear hearkened to the stillness of the solemn air;
No sound of wheel rumbling nor of foot falling,
And the busy morning cries came thin and spare.
Then boys I heard, as they went to school, calling,
They gathered up the crystal manna to freeze
Their tongues with tasting, their hands with snowballing;
Or rioted in a drift, plunging up to the knees;
Or peering up from under the white-mossed wonder,
"O look at the trees!" they cried, "O look at the trees!"
With lessened load a few carts creak and blunder,
Following along the white deserted way,
A country company long dispersed asunder:
When now already the sun, in pale display
Standing by Paul's high dome, spread forth below
His sparkling beams, and awoke the stir of the day.
For now doors open, and war is waged with the snow;
And trains of somber men, past tale of number,

Snow

Tread long brown paths, as toward their toil they go:
But even for them awhile no cares encumber
Their minds diverted; the daily word is unspoken,
The daily thoughts of labor and sorrow slumber
At the sight of the beauty that greets them, for the charm,
they have broken.

ROBERT BRIDGES

WINTER

WHEN icicles hang by the wall,
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
And milk comes frozen home in pail,
When blood is nipp'd and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
Tu-whit;
Tu-who, a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

When all aloud the wind doth blow,
And coughing drowns the parson's saw,
And birds sit brooding in the snow,
And Marion's nose looks red and raw,
When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
Tu-whit;
Tu-who, a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

THE SNOW-STORM

ANNOUNCED by all the trumpets of the sky,
Arrives the snow, and, driving o'er the fields,
Seems nowhere to alight: the whited air
Hides hills and woods, the river, and the heaven,
And veils the farm-house at the garden's end.
The sled and traveller stopped, the courier's feet
Delayed, all friends shut out, the housemates sit
Around the radiant fireplace, enclosed
In a tumultuous privacy of storm.

Come see the north wind's masonry.
Out of an unseen quarry evermore
Furnished with tile, the fierce artificer
Curves his white bastions with projected roof
Round every windward stake, or tree, or door.
Speeding, the myriad-handed, his wild work
So fanciful, so savage, nought cares he
For number or proportion. Mockingly,
On coop or kennel he hangs Parian wreaths;
A swan-like form invests the hidden thorn;
Fills up the farmer's lane from wall to wall,
Maugre the farmer's sighs; and at the gate
A tapering turret overtops the work.
And when his hours are numbered, and the world
Is all his own, retiring, as he were not,
Leaves, when the sun appears, astonished Art
To mimic in slow structures, stone by stone,
Built in an age, the mad wind's nightwork,
The frolic architecture of the snow.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

S N O W

Out of the gray air grew snow and more snow
Soundlessly in nonillions of flakes
Conmingling and sinking negligently
To ground, soft as froth and easy as ashes
Alighting, closing the ring of sight. And,
Siltling, it augmented everything
Furring the bare leaf, blurring the thorn,
Fluffing, too, the telephone-wire, padding
All the paths and boosting boots, and puffing
Big over rims, like boiling milk, meekly
Indulging the bulging hill, and holdly
Bolstering the retiring hole, until
It owned and integrated all. And then
Snow stopped, disclosed anonymity
Imposed, the blank and blotless sea in which
Both dotted tree and dashing bird were sunk,
And anchored ground and rocking grass engrossed.

And soon the knock and hiss of cistern ceased as
Gradually with inklings and wrinkling strings
Of ice the thickening cold anchored the skin
And slow core of water, gluing and glossing
All leaks, niggling or great, naked or guarded.
Long snaughters of ice at the tap's snout hung
Jagged and stiff like straw-ends this hard morning.
At every vent things hesitated, here,
In conforming holes and huts, the shy creatures
Shrank from issuing, and, rooted together,
Stood arrested and irresolute at doors,
Peppering with peepings the surprising fields—

Fox in knoll, fowl in house, heifer in hovel.

Only the bull, dubious and delicate, stalked
In his paddock, distrust spiking his blind steps.
His spinning eye, his spoked glances, glinted and
Tilted. His horn gored and scorned the ground, and
scored

The oak, and fans of vapor jetted and jumped
Stiffly from nostrils, incensing the loose snow
Like smoke, and powdering his knees. Noisily,
On the sleeked lake onlookers lingered in ring
Round the single and deferent skater leaning
over in flight, like grass slanted by wind,
Foot-engrossed, locked in his own looking-glass
Of conscious joy and evident finery
Of movement, forgetful of outer voices.
Forgetful of venom, of fame, of laughter,
Of flouting Evil and of touting Good that
Waited woodenly for him like tormentors
At the end and edge of his dream, to waken
And claim him. So he slid on, as we all do,
Forgetting the morrow, forgetting too
The marrow of water in the bone of ice
(Like the worm in the wood), the liquefaction
And friction in all fixed things, virtue in vice,
The bomb domanial in the dome of blue.

W. R. RODGERS

1

Devils there many be, and Gods but one

LUCIFER IN STARLIGHT

ON a starr'd night Prince Lucifer uprose.
Tired of his dark dominion swung the fiend
Above the rolling ball in cloud part screen'd,
Where sinners hugg'd their spectre of repose.
Poor prey to his hot fit of pride were those.
And now upon his western wing he lean'd,
Now his huge bulk o'er Afric's sands carcen'd,
Now the black planet shadow'd Arctic snows.
Soaring through wider zones that prick'd his scars
With memory of the old revolt from Awe,
He reach'd a middle height, and at the stars,
Which are the brain of heaven, he look'd, and sank.
Around the ancient track march'd, rank on rank,
The army of unalterable law.

GEORGE MEREDITH

THREE THINGS THERE BE

THREE things there be in man's opinion dear,
Fame, many friends, and fortune's dignities:
False visions all, which in our sense appear,
To sanctify desires idolatry.
For what is fortune, but a watery glass?
Whose crystal forehead wants a steely back,
Where rain and storms blow all away that was,
Whose ship alike both depths and shallows wrack.
Fame again, which from blinding power takes light,
Both Caesar's shadow is, and Cato's friend,

Auguries of innocence

The child of humor, not allied to right,
Living by oft exchange of winged end.
And many friends, false strength of feeble mind,
Betraying equals, as true slaves to might;
Like echoes still send voices down the wind,
But never in adversity find right.
Then man, though virtue of extremities
The middle be, and so hath two to one,
By place and nature constant enemies,
And against both these no strength but her own,
Yet quit thou for her, friends, fame, fortune's throne;
Devils there many be, and Gods but one.

FULKE GREVILLE, LORD BROOKE

AUGURIES OF INNOCENCE

To see a World in a grain of sand,
And a Heaven in a wild flower,
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand,
And Eternity in an hour.
A robin redbreast in a cage
Puts all Heaven in a rage.
A dove-house fill'd with doves and pigeons
Shudders Hell thro' all its regions.
A dog starv'd at his master's gate
Predicts the ruin of the State.
A horse misus'd upon the road
Calls to Heaven for human blood.
Each outcry of the hunted hare
A fibre from the brain does tear.
A skylark wounded in the wing,
A cherubim does cease to sing.

Auguries of innocence

The game-cock clipt and arm'd for fight
Does the rising sun affright.
Every wolf's and lion's howl
Raises from Hell a Human soul.
The wild deer, wandering here and there,
Keeps the Human soul from care.
The lamb misus'd breeds public strife,
And yet forgives the butcher's knife.
The bat that flits at close of eve
Has left the brain that won't believe.
The owl that calls upon the night
Speaks the unbeliever's fright.
He who shall hurt the little wren
Shall never be belov'd by men.
He who the ox to wrath has mov'd
Shall never be by woman lov'd.
The wanton boy that kills the fly
Shall feel the spider's enmity.
He who torments the chafer's sprite
Weaves a bower in endless night.
The caterpillar on the leaf
Repeats to thee thy mother's grief.
Kill not the moth nor butterfly,
For the Last Judgment draweth nigh.
He who shall train the horse to war
Shall never pass the polar bar.
The beggar's dog and widow's cat,
Feed them, and thou wilt grow fat.
The gnat that sings his summer's song
Poison gets from Slander's tongue.
The poison of the snake and newt
Is the sweat of Envy's foot.
The poison of the honey-bee
Is the artist's jealousy.
The prince's robes and beggar's rags

Auguries of innocence

Are toadstools on the miser's bags.
A truth that's told with bad intent
Beats all the lies you can invent.
It is right it should be so;
Man was made for joy and woe;
And when this we rightly know,
Thro' the world we safely go.
Joy and woe are woven fine,
A clothing for the soul divine;
Under every grief and pine
Runs a joy with silken twine.
The babe is more than swaddling-bands;
Throughout all these human lands
Tools were made, and horn were hands,
Every farmer understands.
Every tear from every eye
Becomes a babe in Eternity;
This is caught by Females bright,
And return'd to its own delight.
The bleat, the bark, bellow, and roar
Are waves that beat on Heaven's shore.
The babe that weeps the rod beneath
Writes revenge in realms of death.
The beggar's rags, fluttering in air,
Does to rags the heavens tear.
The soldier, arm'd with sword and gun,
Palsied strikes the summer's sun.
The poor man's farthing is worth more
Than all the gold on Afric's shore.
One mite wrung from the labourer's hands
Shall buy and sell the miser's lands
Or, if protected from on high,
Does that whole nation sell and buy.
He who mocks the infant's faith
Shall be mock'd in Age and Death.

Auguries of innocence

He who shall teach the child to doubt
The rotting grave shall ne'er get out.
He who respects the infant's faith
Triumphs over Hell and Death.
The child's toys and the old man's reasons
Are the fruits of the two seasons.
The questioner, who sits so sly,
Shall never know how to reply.
He who replies to words of Doubt
Doth put the light of knowledge out.
The strongest poison ever known
Came from Cæsar's laurel crown.
Nought can deform the human race
Like to the armour's iron brace.
When gold and gems adorn the plough
To peaceful arts shall Envy bow.
A riddle, or the cricket's cry,
Is to Doubt a fit reply.
The emmet's inch and eagle's mile
Make lame Philosophy to smile.
He who doubts from what he sees
Will ne'er believe, do what you please.
If the Sun and Moon should doubt,
They'd immediately go out.
To be in a passion you good may do,
But no good if a passion is in you.
The whore and gambler, by the state
Licensed, build that nation's fate.
The harlot's cry from street to street
Shall weave Old England's winding-sheet.
The winner's shout, the loser's curse,
Dance before dead England's hearse.
Every night and every morn
Some to misery are born.
Every morn and every night

Of what is past

Some are born to sweet delight,
Some are born to sweet delight,
Some are born to endless night.
We are led to believe a lie
When we see not thro' the eye,
Which was born in a night, to perish in a night,
When the Soul slept in beams of light.
God appears, and God is Light,
To those poor souls who dwell in Night;
But does a Human Form display
To those who dwell in realms of Day.

WILLIAM BLAKE

SAILING TO BYZANTIUM

THAT is no country for old men. The young
In one another's arms, birds in the trees,
—Those dying generations—at their song,
The salmon-falls, the mackerel-crowded seas,
Fish, flesh, or fowl, commend all summer long
Whatever is begotten, born, and dies.
Caught in that sensual music all neglect
Monuments of unaging intellect.

An aged man is but a paltry thing,
A tattered coat upon a stick, unless
Soul clap its hands and sing, and louder sing
For every tatter in its mortal dress,
Nor is there singing school but studying
Monuments of its own magnificence;
And therefore I have sailed the seas and come
To the holy city of Byzantium.

Of what is past

O sages standing in God's holy fire
As in the gold mosaic of a wall,
Come from the holy fire, perne in a gyre,
And be the singing-masters of my soul.
Consume my heart away; sick with desire
And fastened to a dying animal
It knows not what it is; and gather me
Into the artifice of eternity.

Once out of nature I shall never take
My bodily form from any natural thing,
But such a form as Grecian goldsmiths make
Of hammered gold and gold enameling
To keep a drowsy Emperor awake;
Or set upon a golden bough to sing
To lords and ladies of Byzantium
Of what is past, or passing, or to come.

W. B. YEATS

KUBLA KHAN

IN Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree:
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round:
And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

or passing, or to come

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momently was forced:
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momently the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war!
The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!

A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me,
That with music loud and long,

Of what is past

I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

SONNET

I COULD not sleep for thinking of the sky,
The unending sky, with all its million suns
Which turn their planets everlastingly
In nothing, where the fire-haired comet runs.
If I could sail that nothing, I should cross
Silence and emptiness with dark stars passing,
Then, in the darkness, see a point of gloss
Burn to a glow, and glare, and keep amassing,
And rage into a sun with wandering planets
And drop behind, and then, as I proceed,
See his last light upon his last moon's granites
Die to a dark that would be night indeed.
Night where my soul might sail a million years
In nothing, not even Death, not even tears.

JOHN MASEFIELD

or passing, or to come

J E H U

PEACE on New England, on the shingled white houses,
on golden

Rod and the red Turkey carpet spikes of sumach. The
little

American flags are flapping in the graveyard. Continuous
Chorus of grasshoppers. Fleece

Of quiet around the mind. Honeysuckle, phlox and
smoke-bush,

Hollyhocks and nasturtium and corn on the cob. And the
pine wood

Smelling of outmoded peace.

A king sat over the gate looking to the desert. A spiral
Of dust came towards him, a special messenger asking
Anxiously, "Is it peace?" The heavy eyebrows lowered,

He answered, "What have I

To do with peace?" and the messenger mopped the sweat
and obedient

Took his place behind the king who still sat scanning
Miles of desert and sky.

Negative prospect; sand in the lungs; blood in the sand;
deceiving

Mirage of what were once ideals or even motives

And in this desert even a ghost can hardly

Live—but in the long run what

Have I to do with life? He got up blandly, harnessed his
horses

And furiously drove, his eyeballs burning and the chari-
ot's

Axles burning hot.

Someone sat in a window with a new coiffure, her rad-
dled

Of what is past

Face, a Muse's possibly once but now a harlot's,
Smirked at the charioteer who, looking past her, signalled
 To the maids to throw her down
And they threw her down and the wheels went over her
 ribs and the carcase,
The one-time inspiration of artists, the toast of kings,
 was abandoned
 To the scavenger dogs of the town.

And now the sand blows over Kent and Wales where we
 may shortly
Learn the secret of the desert's purge, of the mad driving,
The cantery of the gangroned soul, though we are not
 certain
 Whether we shall stand beside
The charioteer, the surgeon, or shall be one with the
 pampered
Queen who tittered in the face of death, unable to
 imagine
 The meaning of the flood-tide.

LOUIS MACNEICE

(August, 1940)

LIKE TO THE FALLING OF A STAR

LIKE to the falling of a star,
Or as the flights of eagles are,
Or like the fresh spring's gaudy hue,
Or silver drops of morning dew,
Or like a wind that chafes the flood.
Or bubbles which on water stood:
Even such is man, whose borrowed light
Is straight called in and paid to night:

or passing, or to come

The wind blows out, the bubble dies,
The spring intombed in autumn lies;
The dew's dried up, the star is shot,
The flight is past, and man forgot.

HENRY KING

TEARS, IDLE TEARS

TEARS, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy autumn-fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more.

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,
That brings our friends up from the under-world,
Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below the verge;
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns
The earliest pipe of half-awakened birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square;
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

Dear as remembered kisses after death,
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feigned
On lips that are for others; deep as love,
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret;
O Death in Life, the days that are no more!

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

Of what is past

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ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

Of what is past

OFT, IN THE STILLY NIGHT

OFT, in the stilly night,
Ere Slumber's chain has bound me,
Fond Memory brings the light
Of other days around me:
The smiles, the tears,
Of boyhood's years,
The words of love then spoken;
The eyes that shone,
Now dimmed and gone,
The cheerful hearts now broken!
Thus, in the stilly night,
Ere Slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad Memory brings the light
Of other days around me.

When I remember all
The friends so linked together
I've seen around me fall,
Like leaves in wintry weather,
I feel like one
Who treads alone
Some banquet-hall deserted,
Whose lights are fled,
Whose garlands dead,
And all but him departed!
Thus, in the stilly night,
Ere Slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad Memory brings the light
Of other days around me.

THOMAS MOORE

or passing, or to come

THE RIVER OF LIFE

THE more we live, more brief appear
Our life's succeeding stages:
A day to childhood seems a year,
And years like passing ages.

The gladsome current of our youth,
Ere passion yet disorders,
Steals lingering like a river smooth
Along its grassy borders.

But as the care-worn cheek grows wan,
And sorrow's shafts fly thicker,
Ye stars, that measure life to man,
Why seem your courses quicker?

When joys have lost their bloom and breath
And life itself is vapid,
Why, as we reach the Falls of Death,
Feel we its tide more rapid?

It may be strange—yet who would change
Time's course to slower speeding,
When one by one our friends have gone
And left our bosoms bleeding?

Heaven gives our years of fading strength
Indemnifying fleetness;
And those of youth, a seeming length,
Proportion'd to their sweetness.

THOMAS CAMPBELL

Of what is past

I REMEMBER, I REMEMBER

I REMEMBER, I remember,
The house where I was born,
The little window where the sun
Came peeping in at morn;
He never came a wink too soon,
Nor brought too long a day,
But now, I often wish the night
Had borne my breath away!

I remember, I remember,
The roses, red and white,
The violets, and the lily-cups,
Those flowers made of light!
The lilacs where the robin built,
And where my brother set
The laburnum on his birthday,—
The tree is living yet!

I remember, I remember,
Where I was used to swing,
And thought the air must rush as fresh
To swallows on the wing;
My spirit flew in feathers then,
That is so heavy now,
And summer pools could hardly cool
The fever on my brow!

I remember, I remember,
The fir trees dark and high;
I used to think their slender tops
Were close against the sky:

or passing, or to come

It was a childish ignorance,
But now 'tis little joy
To know I'm farther off from heaven
Than when I was a boy.

THOMAS HOOD

REMEMBRANCE

Cold in the earth—and the deep snow piled above thee,
Far, far removed, cold in the dreary gravel
Have I forgot, my only Love, to love thee,
Severed at last by Time's all-severing wave?

Now, when alone, do my thoughts no longer hover
Over the mountains, on that northern shore,
Resting their wings where heath and fern-leaves cover
Thy noble heart for ever, ever more?

Cold in the earth—and fifteen wild Decembers,
From those brown hills, have melted into spring:
Faithful, indeed, is the spirit that remembers
After such years of change and suffering!

Sweet Love of youth, forgive, if I forget thee,
While the world's tide is bearing me along;
Other desires and other hopes beset me,
Hopes which obscure, but cannot do thee wrong!

No later light has lightened up my heaven,
No second morn has ever shone for me;
All my life's bliss from thy dear life was given,
All my life's bliss is in the grave with thee.

Of what is past

But, when the days of golden dreams had perished,
And even Despair was powerless to destroy;
Then did I learn how existence could be cherished,
Strengthened and fed without the aid of joy.

Then did I check the tears of useless passion—
Weaned my young soul from yearning after thine;
Sternly denied its burning wish to hasten
Down to that tomb already more than mine.

And, even yet, I dare not let it languish,
Dare not indulge in memory's rapturous pain;
Once drinking deep of that divinest anguish,
How could I seek the empty world again?

EMILY BRONTË

THE SECOND COMING

TURNING and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

Surely some revelation is at hand;
Surely the Second Coming is at hand.
The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out
When a vast image out of *Spiritus Mundi*
Troubles my sight: somewhere in sands of the desert

or passing, or to come

A shape with lion body and the head of a man,
A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds.
The darkness drops again; but now I know
That twenty centuries of stony sleep
Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,
And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

W. B. YEATS

THE OLD FAMILIAR FACES

I HAVE had playmates, I have had companions,
In my days of childhood, in my joyful schooldays;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have been laughing, I have been carousing,
Drinking late, sitting late, with my bosom cronies;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I loved a Love once, fairest among women:
Closed are her doors on me, I must not see her,—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have a friend, a kinder friend has no man
Like an ingrate, I left my friend abruptly;
Left him, to muse on the old familiar faces.

Ghost-like I paced round the haunts of my childhood,
Earth seemed a desert I was bound to traverse,
Seeking to find the old familiar faces.

Of what is past

Friend of my bosom, thou more than a brother,
Why wert not thou born in my father's dwelling?
So might we talk of the old familiar faces.

How some they have died, and some they have left me,
And some are taken from me; all are departed;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

CHARLES LAMB

THE DARKLING THRUSH

I LEANT upon a coppice gate
When Frost was spectre-gray,
And Winter's dregs made desolate
The weakening eye of day.
The tangled vine-stems scored the sky
Like strings of broken lyres,
And all mankind that haunted nigh
Had sought their household fires.

The land's sharp features seemed to be
The Century's corpse outleant,
His crypt the cloudy canopy,
The wind his death-lament.
The ancient pulse of germ and birth
Was shrunken hard and dry,
And every spirit upon earth
Seemed fervorless as I.

At once a voice arose among
The bleak twigs overhead

or passing, or to come

In a full-hearted evensong
Of joy illimited;
An aged thrush, frail, gaunt, and small,
In blast-beruffled plume,
Had chosen thus to fling his soul
Upon the growing gloom.

So little cause for carolings
Of such ecstatic sound
Was written on terrestrial things
Afar or nigh around,
That I could think there trembled through
His happy good-night air
Some blessed Hope, whereof he knew
And I was unaware.

THOMAS HARDY

(December, 1900)

BREAK, BREAK, BREAK

BREAK, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play!
O well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill;
But O for the touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Time

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

ON TIME

FLY envious Time, till thou run out thy race,
Call on the lazy leaden-stepping hours,
Whose speed is but the heavy Plummets pace;
And glut thy self with what thy womb devours,
Which is no more then what is false and vain,
And merely mortal dross;
So little is our loss,
So little is thy gain.
For when as each thing bad thou hast entomb'd,
And last of all, thy greedy self consum'd,
Then long Eternity shall greet our bliss
With an individual kiss;
And Joy shall overtake us as a flood,
When every thing that is sincerely good
And perfectly divine,
With Truth, and Peace, and Love shall ever shine
About the supreme Throne
Of him, t'whose happy-making sight alone,
When once our heav'nly-guided soul shall climb,
Then all this Earthy grossness quit,
Attir'd with Stars, we shall for ever sit,
Triumphing over Death, and Chance, and thee O Time.

JOHN MILTON

AFTERWARDS ?

WHEN the present has latched its postern behind my
tremulous stay,
And the May month flaps its glad green leaves like wings,
Delicate-filmed as new-spun silk, will the people say,
"He was a man who used to notice such things"?

If it be in the dusk when, like an eyelid's soundless blink,
The dewfall-hawk comes crossing the shades to alight
Upon the wind-warped upland thorn, will a gazer think,
"To him this must have been a familiar sight"?

If I pass during some nocturnal blackness, mothy and
warm,
When the hedgehog travels furtively over the lawn,
Will they say, "He strove that such innocent creatures
should come to no harm,
"But he could do little for them; and now he is gone"?

If, when hearing that I have been stilled at last, they
stand at the door,
Watching the full-starred heavens that winter sees,
Will this thought rise on those who will meet my face no
more,
"He was one who had an eye for such mysteries"?

And will any say when my bell of quittance is heard in
the gloom,
And a crossing breeze cuts a pause in its outrollings,
Till they rise again, as they were a new bell's boom,
"He hears it not now, but used to notice such things"?

ON A FLY DRINKING OUT OF HIS CUP

Busy, curious, thirsty fly!
Drink with me and drink as I:
Freely welcome to my cup,
Couldst thou sip and sip it up:
Make the most of life you may,
Life is short and wears away.

Both alike are mine and thine
Hastening quick to their decline:
Thine's a summer, mine's no more,
Though repeated to threescore.
Threescore summers, when they're gone,
Will appear as short as one!

WILLIAM OLDYS

THE HOUR GLASS

CONSIDER this small dust, here in the glass,
By atoms moved:
Could you believe that this the body was
Of one that loved;
And in his mistress' flame playing like a fly,
Was turned to cinders by her eye:
Yes; and in death, as life unblessed,
To have it expressed,
Even ashes of lovers find no rest.

BEN JONSON

BURNT NORTON

τοῦ λόγου δ' ἐόντος ξυνοῦ ζῶουσιν οἱ πολλοὶ
ὥς ἰδίαν ἔχοντες φρόνησιν.

I. p. 77. Fr. 2.

ὁδὸς ἄνω κάτω μία καὶ ὁμή.

I. p. 89. Fr. 60.

Diels: *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (Herakleitos).

I

TIME present and time past
Are both perhaps present in time future,
And time future contained in time past.
If all time is eternally present
All time is unredeemable.
What might have been is an abstraction
Remaining a perpetual possibility
Only in a world of speculation.
What might have been and what has been
Point to one end, which is always present.
Footfalls echo in the memory
Down the passage which we did not take
Towards the door we never opened
Into the rose-garden. My words echo
Thus, in your mind.

But to what purpose
Disturbing the dust on a bowl of rose-leaves
I do not know.

Other echoes
Inhabit the garden. Shall we follow?
Quick, said the bird, find them, find them,

Time

Round the corner. Through the first gate,
Into our first world, shall we follow
The deception of the thrush? Into our first world.
There they were, dignified, invisible,
Moving without pressure, over the dead leaves,
In the autumn heat, through the vibrant air,
And the bird called, in response to
The unheard music hidden in the shrubbery,
And the unseen eyebeam crossed, for the roses
Had the look of flowers that are looked at.
There they were as our guests, accepted and accepting.
So we moved, and they, in a formal pattern,
Along the empty alley, into the box circle,
To look down into the drained pool.
Dry the pool, dry concrete, brown edged,
And the pool was filled with water out of sunlight,
And the lotos rose, quietly, quietly,
The surface glittered out of heart of light,
And they were behind us, reflected in the pool.
Then a cloud passed, and the pool was empty.
Go, said the bird, for the leaves were full of children,
Hidden excitedly, containing laughter.
Go, go, go, said the bird: human kind
Cannot bear very much reality.
Time past and time future
What might have been and what has been
Point to one end, which is always present.

II

Garlic and sapphires in the mud
Clot the bedded axle-tree.
The trilling wire in the blood
Sings below inveterate scars
And reconciles forgotten wars.

The dance along the artery
The circulation of the lymph
Are figured in the drift of stars
Ascend to summer in the tree
We move above the moving tree
In light upon the figured leaf
And hear upon the sodden floor
Below, the boarhound and the boar
Pursue their pattern as before
But reconciled among the stars.

At the still point of the turning world. Neither flesh nor
fleshless;
Neither from nor towards; at the still point, there the
danco is,
But neither arrest nor movement. And do not call it fixity.
Where past and future are gathered. Neither movement
from nor towards,
Neither ascent nor decline. Except for the point, the still
point,
There would be no dance, and there is only the dance.
I can only say, *there* we have been: but I cannot say
where.
And I cannot say, how long, for that is to place it in time.

The inner freedom from the practical desire,
The release from action and suffering, release from the
inner
And the outer compulsion, yet surrounded
By a grace of sense, a white light still and moving,
Erhebung without motion, concentration
Without elimination, both a new world
And the old made explicit, understood
In the completion of its partial ecstasy,
The resolution of its partial horror.

Time

Yet the enchainment of past and future
Woven in the weakness of the changing body,
Protects mankind from heaven and damnation
Which flesh cannot endure.

Time past and time future
Allow but a little consciousness.
To be conscious is not to be in time
But only in time can the moment in the rose-garden,
The moment in the arbour where the rain beat,
The moment in the draughty church at smoke-fall
Be remembered; involved with past and future.
Only through time time is conquered.

III

Here is a place of disaffection
Time before and time after
In a dim light: neither daylight
Investing form with lucid stillness
Turning shadow into transient beauty
With slow rotation suggesting permanence
Nor darkness to purify the soul
Emptying the sensual with deprivation
Cleansing affection from the temporal.
Neither plenitude nor vacancy. Only a flicker
Over the strained time-ridden faces
Distracted from distraction by distraction
Filled with fancies and empty of meaning
Tumid apathy with no concentration
Men and bits of paper, whirled by the cold wind
That blows before and after time,
Wind in and out of unwholesome lungs
Time before and time after.
Eructation of unhealthy souls
Into the faded air, the torpid

Driven on the wind that sweeps the gloomy hills of London,
Hampstead and Clerkenwell, Campden and Putney,
Highgate, Primrose and Ludgate. Not here
Not here the darkness, in this twittering world.

Descend lower, descend only
Into the world of perpetual solitude,
World not world, but that which is not world,
Internal darkness, deprivation
And destitution of all property,
Desiccation of the world of sense,
Evacuation of the world of fancy,
Inoperancy of the world of spirit;
This is the one way, and the other
Is the same, not in movement
But abstention from movement; while the world moves
In appetency, on its metallated ways
Of time past and time future.

iv

Time and the bell have buried the day,
The black cloud carries the sun away.
Will the sunflower turn to us, will the clematis
Stray down, bend to us; tendril and spray
Clutch and cling?
Chill
Fingers of yew be curled
Down on us? After the kingfisher's wing
Has answered light to light, and is silent, the light is still
At the still point of the turning world.

Words move, music moves
Only in time; but that which is only living
Can only die. Words, after speech, reach
Into the silence. Only by the form, the pattern,
Can words or music reach
The stillness, as a Chinese jar still
Moves perpetually in its stillness.
Not the stillness of the violin, while the note lasts,
Not that only, but the co-existence,
Or say that the end precedes the beginning,
And the end and the beginning were always there
Before the beginning and after the end.
And all is always now. Words strain,
Crack and sometimes break, under the burden,
Under the tension, slip, slide, perish,
Decay with imprecision, will not stay in place,
Will not stay still. Shrieking voices
Scolding, mocking, or merely chattering,
Always assail them. The Word in the desert
Is most attacked by voices of temptation,
The crying shadow in the funeral dance,
The loud lament of the disconsolate chimera.

The detail of the pattern is movement,
As in the figure of the ten stairs.
Desire itself is movement
Not in itself desirable;
Love is itself unmoving,
Only the cause and end of movement,
Timeless, and undesiring
Except in the aspect of time
Caught in the form of limitation

Between un-being and being,
Sudden in a shaft of sunlight
Even while the dust moves
There rises the hidden laughter
Of children in the foliage
Quick now, here, now, always—
Ridiculous the waste sad time
Stretching before and after.

T. S. ELIOT

WHEN YOU ARE OLD

WHEN you are old and gray and full of sleep,
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,
And slowly read, and dream of the soft look
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep;

How many loved your moments of glad grace,
And loved your beauty with love false or true;
But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,
And loved the sorrows of your changing face.

And bending down beside the glowing bars
Murmur, a little sadly, how love fled
And paced upon the mountains overhead
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.

W. B. YEATS

Age

JOHN ANDERSON

JOHN ANDERSON, my jo, John,
When we were first acquent,
Your locks were like the raven,
Your bonnie brow was brent;
But now your brow is beld, John,
Your locks are like the snow;
But blessings on your frosty pow,
John Anderson, my jo!

John Anderson, my jo, John,
We clamb the hill tegither;
And mony a canty day, John,
We've had wi' ane anither:
Now we maun totter down, John,
But hand in hand we'll go;
And sleep tegither at the foot,
John Anderson, my jo.

ROBERT BURNS

RABBI BEN EZRA

GROW old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made:
Our times are in his hand
Who saith, "A whole I planned,
Youth shows but half; trust God: see all, nor be afraid!"

464

Not that, amassing flowers,
 Youth sighed, "Which rose make ours,
 Which lily leave and then as best recall?"
 Not that, admiring stars,
 It yearned, "Nor Jove, nor Mars;
 Mine be some figured flame which blends, transcends
 them all!"

Not for such hopes and fears
 Annulling youth's brief years,
 Do I remonstrate: folly wide the mark!
 Rather I prize the doubt
 Low kinds exist without,
 Finished and finite clods, untroubled by a spark.

Poor vaunt of life indeed,
 Were man but formed to feed
 On joy, to solely seek and find and feast:
 Such feasting ended, then
 As sure an end to men;
 Irks care the crop full bird? Frets doubt the maw-
 crammed beast?

Rejoice we are allied
 To that which doth provide
 And not partake, effect and not receive!
 A spark disturbs our clod;
 Nearer we hold of God
 Who gives, than of his tribes that take, I must believe.

Then, welcome each rebuff
 That turns earth's smoothness rough,
 Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go!
 Be our joys three-parts pain!
 Strive, and hold cheap the strain;

Age

Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never grudge the
throe!

For thence,—a paradox
Which comforts while it mocks,—
Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail:
What I aspired to be,
And was not, comforts me:
A brute I might have been, but would not sink i' the
scale.

What is he but a brute
Whose flesh has soul to suit,
Whose spirit works lest arms and legs want play?
To man, propose this test—
Thy body at its best,
How far can that project thy soul on its lone way?

Yet gifts should prove their use:
I own the Past profuse
Of power each side, perfection every turn:
Eyes, ears took in their dole,
Brain treasured up the whole;
Should not the heart beat once "How good to live and
learn"?

Not once beat "Praise be thine!
I see the whole design,
I, who saw power, see now Love perfect too:
Perfect I call thy plan:
Thanks that I was a man!
Maker, remake, complete,—I trust what thou shalt do!"

For pleasant is this flesh;
Our soul, in its rose-mesh
466

Pulled ever to the earth, still yearns for rest:
 Would we some prize might hold
 To match those manifold
 Possessions of the brute,—gain most as we did best!

Let us not always say,
 "Spite of this flesh to-day
 I strove, made head, gained ground upon the whole!"
 As the bird wings and sings,
 Let us cry, "All good things
 Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now, than flesh helps
 soul!"

Therefore I summon age
 To grant youth's heritage,
 Life's struggle having so far reached its term:
 Thence shall I pass, approved
 A man, for aye removed
 From the developed brute; a God though in the germ.

And I shall thereupon
 Take rest, ere I be gone
 Once more on my adventure brave and new:
 Fearless and unperplexed,
 When I wage battle next,
 What weapons to select, what armor to indue.

Youth ended, I shall try
 My gain or loss thereby;
 Leave the fire ashes, what survives is gold:
 And I shall weigh the same,
 Give life its praise or blame:
 Young, all lay in dispute; I shall know, being old.

For not, when evening shuts,

Age

A certain moment cuts
The deed off, calls the glory from the gray:
A whisper from the west
Shoots—"Add this to the rest,
Take it and try its worth: here dies another day."

So, still within this life,
Though lifted o'er its strife,
Let me discern, compare, pronounce at last,
"This rage was right i' the main,
That acquiescence vain:
The Future I may face now I have proved the Past."

For more is not reserved
To man, with soul just nerved
To act to-morrow what he learns to-day:
Here, work enough to watch
The Master work, and catch
Hints of the proper craft, tricks of the tool's true play.

As it was better, youth
Should strive, through acts uncouth,
Toward making, then repose on aught found made:
So, better, age, exempt
From strife, should know, than tempt
Further. Thou waitedst age: wait death nor be afraid!

Enough now, if the Right
And Good and Infinite
Be named here, as thou callest thy hand thine own,
With knowledge absolute,
Subject to no dispute
From fools that crowded youth, nor let thee feel alone.

Be there, for once and all,
468

Severed great minds from small,
 Announced to each his station in the Past!
 Was I, the world arraigned,
 Were they, my soul disdained,
 Right? Let age speak the truth and give us peace at last!

Now, who shall arbitrate?
 Ten men love what I hate,
 Shun what I follow, slight what I receive;
 Ten, who in ears and eyes
 Match me: we all surmise,
 They this thing, and I that: whom shall my soul believe?

Not on the vulgar mass
 Called "work," must sentence pass,
 Things done, that took the eye and had the price;
 O'er which, from level stand,
 The low world laid its hand,
 Found straightway to its mind, could value in a trice:

But all, the world's coarse thumb
 And finger failed to plumb,
 So passed in making up the main account;
 All instincts immature,
 All purposes unsure,
 That weighed not as his work, yet swelled the man's
 amount:

Thoughts hardly to be packed
 Into a narrow act,
 Fancies that broke through language and escaped;
 All I could never be,
 All, men ignored in me,
 This, I was worth to God, whose wheel the pitcher
 shaped.

Age

Ay, note that Potter's wheel,
That metaphor! and feel
Why time spins fast, why passive lies our clay,—
Thou, to whom fools propound,
When the wine makes its round,
"Since life fleets, all is change; the Past gone, seize
to-day!"

Fool! All that is, at all,
Lasts over, past recall;
Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand sure:
What entered into thee,
That was, is, and shall be:
Time's wheel runs back or stops: Potter and clay endure.

He fixed thee 'mid this dance
Of plastic circumstance,
This Present, thou, forsooth, would fain arrest:
Machinery just meant
To give thy soul its bent,
Try thee and turn thee forth, sufficiently impressed.

What though the earlier grooves,
Which ran the laughing loves
Around thy base, no longer pause and press;
What though, about thy rim,
Skull-things in order grim
Grow out, in graver mood, obey the sterner stress?

Look not thou down but up!
To uses of a cup,
The festal board, lamp's flash and trumpet's peal,
The new wine's foaming flow,
The Master's lips aglow!
Thou, heaven's consummate cup, what needst thou with
earth's wheel?

But I need, now as then,
Thee, God, who moldest men;
And since, not even while the whirl was worst,
Did I—to the wheel of life
With shapes and colors rife,
Bound dizzily—mistake my end, to slake thy thirst:

So, take and use thy work:
Amend what flaws may lurk,
What strain o' the stuff, what warpings past the aim!
My times be in thy hand!
Perfect the cup as planned!
Let age approve of youth, and death complete the same!

ROBERT BROWNING

THOMAS THE RHYMER

TRUE Thomas lay on Huntlie bank;
A wonder he spied wi' his e'e;
And there he saw a ladye bright
Come riding down by Eildon Tree.

Her skirt was o' the grass-green silk,
Her mantle o' the velvet fyne;
At ilka tuft o' her horse's mane
Hung fifty silver bells and nine.

True Thomas he pu'd aff his cap,
And louted low down on his knee:
"Hail to thee, Mary, Queen of Heaven!
For thy peer on earth could never be."

Ballads

"O no, O no, Thomas," she said,
"That name does not belang to me;
I'm but the Queen o' fair Elfland,
That am hither come to visit thee.

"Harp and carp, Thomas," she said;
"Harp and carp along wi' me;
And if ye dare to kiss my lips,
Sure of your bodie I will be."

"Betide me weal, betide me woe,
That weird shall never daunten me."
Syne he has kissed her rosy lips,
All underneath the Eildon Tree.

"Now ye maun go wi' me," she said,
"True Thomas, ye maun go wi' me;
And ye maun serve me seven years,
Thro' weal or woe as may chance to be."

She's mounted on her milk-white steed,
She's ta'en true Thomas up behind;
And aye, whene'er her bridle rang,
The steed gaed swifter than the wind.

O they rade on, and farther on,
The steed gaed swifter than the wind;
Until they reached a desert wide,
And living land was left behind.

"Light down, light down now, true Thomas,
And lean your head upon my knee;
Abide ye there a little space,
And I will show you wonders three.

Ballads

"O see ye not yon narrow road,
So thick beset wi' thorns and briars?
That is the Path of Righteousness,
Though after it but few inquire.

"And see ye not yon broad, broad road,
That lies across the lily leven?
That is the Path of Wickedness,
Though some call it the Road to Heaven.

"And see ye not yon bouny road
That winds about the fernie brae?
That is the Road to fair Elfland,
Where thou and I this night maun gae.

"But, Thomas, ye sall haud your tongue,
Whatever ye may hear or see;
For speak ye word in Elfynd-land,
Ye'll ne'er win back to your ain countrie."

O they rade on, and farther on,
And they waded rivers above the knee;
And they saw neither sun nor moon,
But they heard the roaring of the sea.

It was mirk, mirk night, there was nae starlight,
They waded thro' red blude to the knee;
For a' the blude that's shed on the earth
Rins through the springs o' that countrie.

Syne they came to a garden green,
And she pu'd an apple frae a tree:
"Take this for thy wages, true Thomas;
It will give thee the tongue that can never lee."

Ballads

"My tongue is my ain," true Thomas he said;
"A gudely gift ye wad gie to me!
I neither could to buy or sell
At fair or tryst where I might be.

"I could neither speak to prince or peer,
Nor ask of grace from fair ladye!"
"Now hold thy peace, Thomas," she said,
"For as I say, so must it be."

He has gotten a coat of the evon cloth,
And a pair o' shoon of the velvet green;
And till seven years were gane and past,
True Thomas on earth was never seen.

ANON

THE LADY OF SHALOTT

I

ON either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the wold and meet the sky;
And through the field the road runs by
 To many-towered Camelot;
And up and down the people go,
Gazing where the lilies blow
Round an island there below,
 The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
Little breezes dusk and shiver

Through the wave that runs forever
By the island in the river
 Flowing down to Camelot.
Four gray walls, and four gray towers,
Overlook a space of flowers,
And the silent isle embowers
 The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veiled,
Slide the heavy barges trailed
By slow horses; and unhailed
The shallop flitteth silken-sailed
 Skimming down to Camelot:
But who hath seen her wave her hand?
Or at the casement seen her stand?
Or is she known in all the land,
 The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early
In *among the bearded barley*,
Hear a song that echoes cheerly
From the river winding clearly,
 Down to towered Camelot;
And by the moon the reaper weary,
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
Listening, whispers, 'Tis the fairy
 Lady of Shalott.'

. II

There she weaves by night and day
A magic web with colors gay.
She has heard a whisper say,
A curse is on her if she stay
 To look down to Camelot.

Ballads

She knows not what the curse may be,
And so she weaveth steadily,
And little other care hath she,
The Lady of Shalott.

And moving through a mirror clear
That hangs before her all the year,
Shadows of the world appear.
There she sees the highway near
Winding down to Camelot;
There the river eddy whirls,
And there the surly village-churls,
And the red cloaks of market girls,
Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
An abbot on an ambling pad,
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,
Or long-haired page in crimson clad,
Goes by to towered Camelot;
And sometimes through the mirror blue
The knights come riding two and two;
She hath no loyal knight and true,
The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights
To weave the mirror's magic sights,
For often through the silent nights
A funeral, with plumes and lights
And music, went to Camelot;
Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers lately wed;
'I am half sick of shadows,' said
The Lady of Shalott.

III

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,
He rode between the barley-sheaves;
The sun came dazzling through the leaves,
And flamed upon the brazen greaves
 Of bold Sir Lancelot.
A red-cross knight forever kneeled
To a lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field,
 Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glittered free,
Like to some branch of stars we see
Hung in the golden Galaxy.
The bridle bells rang merrily
 As he rode down to Camelot;
And from his blazoned baldric slung
A mighty silver bugle hung,
And as he rode his armor rung,
 Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather
Thick-jewelled shone the saddle-leather,
The helmet and the helmet-feather
Burned like one burning flame together
 As he rode down to Camelot;
As often through the purple night,
Below the starry clusters bright,
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
 Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glowed;
On burnished hooves his war-horse trode;
From underneath his helmet flowed

Ballads

His coal-black curls as on he rode,
As he rode down to Camelot,
From the bank and from the river
He flashed into the crystal mirror,
'Tirra lirra,' by the river
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,
She made three paces through the room,
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
She looked down to Camelot.
Out flew the web and floated wide;
The mirror cracked from side to side;
'The curse is come upon me,' cried
The Lady of Shalott.

IV

In the stormy east-wind straining,
The pale yellow woods were waning,
The broad stream in his banks complaining,
Heavily the low sky raining
Over towered Camelot;
Down she came and found a boat
Beneath a willow left afloat,
And round about the prow she wrote
The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse
Like some bold seer in a trance,
Seeing all his own mischance—
With a glassy countenance
Did she look to Camelot.
And at the closing of the day

Ballads

She loosed the chain, and down she lay;
The broad stream bore her far away,
The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white
That loosely flew to left and right—
The leaves upon her falling light—
Through the noises of the night
She floated down to Camelot;
And as the boat-head wound along
The willowy hills and fields among,
They heard her singing her last song,
The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
Till her blood was frozen slowly,
And her eyes were darkened wholly,
Turned to towered Camelot.
For ere she reached upon the tide
The first house by the water-side,
Singing, in her song she died,
The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
By garden-wall and gallery,
A gleaming shape she floated by,
Dead-pale between the houses high,
Silent into Camelot.
Out upon the wharfs they came,
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
And round the prow they read her name,
The Lady of Shalott.

Ballads

And in the lighted palace near
Died the sound of royal cheer;
And they crossed themselves for fear,
 All the knights at Camelot.
But Lancelot mused a little space;
He said, 'She has a lovely face;
God in his mercy lend her grace,
 The Lady of Shalott.'

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

AN EXCELENTE BALADE OF CHARITIE

(As wroten bie the gode priest, Thomas Rowley, 1464)

In Virginè the sweltry sun 'gan sheene,
And hot upon the mees did cast his ray;
And apple ripened from its paly green,
And the soft pear did bend the leafy spray;
The pied chelandre sung the livelong day;
'Twas now the pride, the manhood of the year,
And eke the ground was dressed in its most neat aumere.

The sun was gleaming in the midst of day,
Dead-still the air, and eke the welkin blue,
When from the sea arose in drear array
A heap of clouds of sable sullen hue,
The which full fast unto the woodland drew,
Hiding at once the sunnis beauteous face,
And the black tempest swelled, and gathered up apace.

Beneath a holm, fast by a pathway-side,
Which did unto Saint Codwin's convent lead,

A hapless pilgrim moaning did abide,
 Poor in his view, ungentle in his weed,
 Long fillèd with the miseries of need.
Where from the hailstone could the beggar fly?
He had no houses there, nor any convent nigh.

Look in his clouded face, his sprite there scan;
 How woe-begone, how withered, sapless, dead!
Haste to thy church-gleve-house, accursèd man!
 Haste to thy kiste, thy only sleeping bed.
Cold as the clay which will grow on thy head
Is charity and love among high elves;
Knightis and barons live for pleasure and themselves.

The gathered storm is ripe; the big drops fall,
 The sun-burnt meadows smoke, and drink the rain;
The coming ghastrness do the cattle 'pall,
 And the full flocks are driving o'er the plain;
Dashed from the clouds, the waters fly again;
The welkin opes; the yellow lightning flies
And the hot fiery steam in the wide lowings dies.

List! now the thunder's rattling noisy sound
 Moves slowly on, and then embollen clangs,
Shakes the high spire, and lost, expended, drowned,
 Still on the frightened ear of terror hangs,
The winds are up; the lofty elmen swangs;
Again the lightning and the thunder pours,
And the full clouds are burst at once in stony showers.

Spurring his palfrey o'er the watery plain,
 The Abbot of Saint Godwin's convent came;
His chapournette was drented with the rain,
 And his pencte girdle met with mickle shame;
He backwards told his bede-roll at the same

Ballads

The storm increases, and he drew aside,
With the poor alms-craver near to the holm to bide.

His cloak was all of Lincoln cloth so fine,
With a gold button fastened near his chin,
His autremete was edged with golden twine,
And his shoe's peak a loverde's might have been;
Full well it shown he thoughten cost no sin.
The trammels of his palfry pleased his sight,
For the horse-milliner his head with roses dight.

"An alms, sir priest!" the drooping pilgrim said,
"O! let me wait within your convent-door,
Till the sun shineth high above our head,
And the loud tempest of the air is o'er.
Helpless and old am I, alas! and poor.
No house, no friend, no money in my pouch,
All that I call my own is this my silver crouche."

"Varlet!" replied the Abbot, "cease your din;
This is no season alms and prayers to give;
My porter never lets a beggar in;
None touch my ring who not in honour live."
And now the sun with the black clouds did strive,
And shedding on the ground his glaring ray;
The abbot spurred his steed, and eftsoon rode away.

Once more the sky was black, the thunder rolled,
Fast running o'er the plain a priest was seen;
Not dight full proud, not buttoned up in gold,
His cope and jape were grey, and eke were clean;
A limitour he was of order seen;
And from the pathway-side then turned he,
Where the poor beggar lay beneath the elmen tree.



"An alms, sir priest!" the drooping pilgrim said,
"For sweet Saint Mary and your order sake."
The limitour then loosened his pouch-thread,
And did thereout a groat of silver take:
The needy pilgrim did for hallinc shake,
Here, take this silver, it may ease thy care,
We are God's stewards all, naught of our own we bear.

"But ah! unhappy pilgrim, learn of me,
Scathe any give a rent-roll to their Lord;
Here, take my semi-cope, thou'rt bare, I see,
'Tis thine, the saints will give me my reward."
He left the pilgrim, and his way aborde.
Virgin and holy saint, who sit in gloure,
Or give the mighty will, or give the good man power.

THOMAS CHATTERTON

QUIA AMORE LANGUEO

•
In a valley of this restless mind
I sought in mountain and in mead,
Trusting a true love for to find.
Upon an hill then took I heed;
A voice I heard (and near I yede)
In great dolour complaining tho:
See, dear soul, how my sides bleed
Quia amore langueo.

Upon this hill I found a tree,
Under a tree a man sitting;

yede] went.

Ballads

From head to foot wounded was he;
His heart blood I saw bleeding;
A seemly man to be a king,
A gracious face to look unto.
I asked why he had paining;
Quia amore langueo.

I am true love that false was never;
My sister, man's soul, I loved her thus.
Because we would in no wise dis sever
I left my kingdom glorious.
I purveyed her a palace full precious;
She fled, I followed, I loved her so
That I suffered this pain piteous
Quia amore langueo.

My fair love and my spouse bright
I saved her from beating, and she hath me bet;
I clothed her in grace and heavenly light;
This bloody shirt she hath on me set;
For longing of love yet would I not let;
Sweet strokes are these: lo!
I have loved her ever as I her het
Quia amore langueo.

I crowned her with bliss and she me with thorn;
I led her to chamber and she me to die;
I brought her to worship and she me to scorn;
I did her reverence and she me villainy.
To love that loveth is no maistry;
Her hate made never my love her foe
Ask me then no question why—
Quia amore langueo.

het I promised.

Look unto mine handes, man!
These gloves were given me when I her sought;
They be not white, but red and wan;
Embroidered with blood my spouse them brought.
They will not off; I loose hem nought:
I woo her with hem wherever she go.
These hands for her so friendly fought
Quia amore langueo.

Marvel not, man, though I sit still.
See, love hath shod me wonder strait:
Buckled my feet, as was her will,
With sharp nails (well thou may'st wait!)
In my love was never desait;
All my membres I have opened her to;
My body I made her herte's bait
Quia amore langueo.

In my side I have made her nest;
Look in, how wet a wound is here!
This is her chamber, here shall she rest,
That she and I may sleep in fere.
Here may she wash, if any filth were;
Here is seat for all her woe;
Come when she will, she shall have cheer
Quia amore langueo.

I will abide till she be ready,
I will her sue if she say nay;
If she be retchless I will be greedy,
If she be dangerous I will her pray;
If she weep, then bide I ne may:
Mine arms ben spread to clip her me to.
Cry once, I come: now, soul, assay!
Quia amore langueo.

Ballads

Fair love, let us go play:
Apples ben ripe in my gardayne.
I shall thee clothe in a new array,
Thy meat shall be milk, honey and wine.
Fair love, let us go dine:
Thy sustenance is in my crippe, lol
Tary thou not, my fair spouse mine,
Quia amore langueo.

If thou be foul, I shall thee make clean;
If thou be sick, I shall thee heal;
If thou mourn ought, I shall thee mene;
Why wilt thou not, fair love, with me deal?
Foudest thou ever love so leal?
What wilt thou, soul, that I shall do?
I may not unkindly thee appeal,
Quia amore langueo.

What shall I do now with my spouse
But abide her of my gentleness,
Till that she look out of her house
Of fleshly affection? love mine she is;
Her bed is made, her bolster is bliss,
Her chamber is chosen; is there none mo.
Look out on me at the window of kindness,
Quia amore langueo.

My love is in her chamber: hold your peacel
Make ye no noise, but let her sleep.
My babe I would not were in disease,
I may not hear my dear child weep.
With my pap I shall her keep;
Ne marvel ye not though I tend her to:

crippe] *scrip*.

mene] *care* [or].

Ballads

This wound in my side had ne'er been so deep
But *Quia amore langueo*.

Long thou for love never so high,
My love is more than thine may be.
Thou weepest, thou gladdest, I sit thee by:
Yet wouldst thou once, love, look unto me!
Should I always feede thee
With children meat? Nay, love, not so!
I will prove thy love with adversitè,
Quia amore langueo.

Wax not weary, mine own wifel
What mede is aye to live in comfort?
In tribulation I reign more rife
Ofter times than in disport.
In weal and in woe I am aye to support:
Mine own wife, go not me fro!
Thy mede is marked, when thou art mort:
Quia amore langueo.

ANON

(14th Century)

ANNABEL LEE

It was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden there lived whom you may know
By the name of ANNABEL LEE;
And this maiden she lived with no other thought
Than to love and be loved by me.

Ballads

I was a child and *she* was a child,
In this kingdom by the sea;
But we loved with a love that was more than love—
I and my ANNABEL LEE—
With a love that the wingèd seraphs of heaven
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,
In this kingdom by the sea,
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling
My beautiful ANNABEL LEE;
So that her high-born kinsmen came
And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulchre
In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in heaven,
Went envying her and me—
Yes! that was the reason (as all men know,
In this kingdom by the sea)
That the wind came out of the cloud by night,
Chilling and killing my ANNABEL LEE.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love
Of those who were older than we—
Of many far wiser than we;
And neither the angels in heaven above,
Nor the demons down under the sea,
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE:

For the moon never beams without bringing me dreams
Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE;
And the stars never rise but I feel the bright eyes
Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE;

Ballads

And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
Of my darling—my darling—my life and my bride,
In the sepulchre there by the sea,
In her tomb by the sounding sea.

EDGAR ALLAN POE

HELEN OF KIRCONNELL

I wish I were where Helen lies,
Night and day on me she cries;
O that I were where Helen lies,
On fair Kirconnell lea!

Curst be the heart that thought the thought,
And curst the hand that fired the shot,
When in my arms burd Helen dropt,
And died to succour me!

O think na ye my heart was sair,
When my Love dropp'd and spak nae mair!
There did she swoon wi' meikle care,
On fair Kirconnell lea.

As I went down the water side,
None but my foe to be my guide,
None but my foe to be my guide,
On fair Kirconnell lea;

Ballads

I lighted down my sword to draw,
I hackèd him in pieces sma',
I hackèd him in pieces sma',
For her sake that died for me.

O Helen fair, beyond compare!
I'll mak a garland o' thy hair,
Shall bind my heart for evermair,
Until the day I die!

O that I were where Helen lies!
Night and day on me she cries;
Out of my bed she bids me rise,
Says, "Haste, and come to me!"

O Helen fair! O Helen chaste!
If I were with thee, I'd be blest,
Where thou lies low and taks thy rest,
On fair Kirconnell lea.

I wish my grave were growing green,
A winding-sheet drawn owre me e'en,
And I in Helen's arms lying,
On fair Kirconnell lea.

I wish I were where Helen lies!
Night and day on me she cries;
And I am weary of the skies,
For her sake that died for me.

ANON

THE CONGO

(A Study of the Negro Race)

I—THEIR BASIC SAVAGERY

Fat black bucks in a wine-barrel room, *A deep rolling bass*
Barrel-house kings, with feet unstable,
Sagged and reeled and pounded on the table,
Pounded on the table,
Beat an empty barrel with the handle of a broom,
Hard as they were able,
Boom, boom, BOOM,
With a silk umbrella and the handle of a broom,
Boomlay, boomlay, boomlay, BOOM. *More deliberate.*
THEN I had religion, THEN I had a vision. *Solemnly chanted*
I could not turn from their revel in derision.
THEN I SAW THE CONGO, CREEPING THROUGH THE BLACK,
CUTTING THROUGH THE JUNGLE WITH A GOLDEN TRACK.
Then along that riverbank
A thousand miles
Tattooed cannibals danced in files;
Then I heard the boom of the blood-lust song
And a thigh-bone beating on a tin-pan gong.
And "BLOOD!" screamed the whistles and the fifes of the
warriors,
"BLOOD!" screamed the skull-faced, lean witch-doctors;
"Whirl ye the deadly voo-doo rattle,
Harry the uplands,
Steal all the cattle,
Rattle-rattle, rattle-rattle,
Bing!
Boomlay, boomlay, boomlay, BOOM!" *A rapidly piling climax of speed and racket*
A roaring, epic, rag-time tune *With a philosophic pause*

Ballads

From the mouth of the Congo
To the Mountains of the Moon.

Death is an Elephant,
Torch-eyed and horrible,
Foam-flanked and terrible.

BOOM, steal the pygmies,

BOOM, kill the Arabs,

BOOM, kill the white men,

Hoo, Hoo, Hoo.

Listen to the yell of Leopold's ghost
Burning in Hell for his hand-maimed host.

Hear how the demons chuckle and yell

Cutting his hands off down in Hell.

Listen to the creepy proclamation,

Blown through the lairs of the forest-nation,

Blown past the white-ants' hill of clay,

Blown past the marsh where the butterflies play:—

"Be careful what you do,

Or Mumbo-Jumbo, god of the Congo,

And all of the other

Gods of the Congo,

Mumbo-Jumbo will hoo-doo you,

Mumbo-Jumbo will hoo-doo you,

Mumbo-Jumbo will hoo-doo you."

*Skrilly and
with a
heavily ac-
cented metre*

*Like the
wind in the
chimney*

*All the O
sounds very
golden.
Heavy ac-
cents very
heavy. Light
accents very
light. Last
line whis-
pered*

II—THEIR IRREPRESSIBLE HIGH SPIRITS

Wild crap-shooters with a whoop and a call

Danced the juba in their gambling-hall,

And laughed fit to kill, and shook the town,

And gayed the policemen and laughed them down

With a boomlay, boomlay, boomlay, BOOM.

THEN I SAW THE CONGO, CREEPING THROUGH THE BLACK,

CUTTING THROUGH THE JUNGLE WITH A GOLDEN TRACK.

*Rather shrill
and high*

Ballads

A negro fairyland swung into view,
A minstrel river
Where dreams come true.
The ebony palace soared on high
Through the blossoming trees to the evening
sky.

*Read exactly
as in first
section. Lay
emphasis on
the delicate
ideas. Keep
as light-
footed as
possible*

The inlaid porches and casements shone
With gold and ivory and elephant-bone.
And the black crowd laughed till their sides were sore
At the baboon butler in the agate door,
And the well-known tunes of the parrot band
That trilled on the bushes of that magic land.
A troupe of skull-faced witch-men came
Through the agate doorway in suits of flame—
Yea, long-tailed coats with a gold-leaf crust
And hats that were covered with diamond-dust.
And the crowd in the court gave a whoop and a call
And danced the juba from wall to wall.
But the witch-men suddenly stilled the throng
With a stern cold glare, and a stern old song:
"Mumbo-Jumbo will hoo-doo you." . . .

*With pom-
posity*

*With a great
deliberation
and ghostli-
ness*

Just then from the doorway, as fat as shot
Came the cake-walk princes in their long red
coats,

*With over-
whelming
assurance,
good cheer,
and pomp*

Canes with a brilliant lacquer shine,
And tall silk hats that were red as wine.
And they pranced with their butterfly partners
there,

*With grow-
ing speed
and sharply
marked
dance-
rhythm*

Coal-black maidens with pearls in their hair,
Knee-skirts trimmed with the jassamine sweet,
And bells on their ankles and little black feet.
And the couples railed at the chant and the frown
Of the witch-men lean, and laughed them down.
(Oh, rare was the revel, and well worth while

Ballads

That made those glowering witch-men smile.)

The cake-walk royalty then began
To walk for a cake that was tall as a man
To the tune of "Boomlay, boomlay, BOOM,"
While the witch-men laughed, with a sinister air,
And sang with the scalavags prancing there:
"Walk with care, walk with care,
Or Mumbo-Jumbo, god of the Congo,
And all of the other
Gods of the Congo,
Mumbo-Jumbo will hoo-doo you.
Beware, beware, walk with care,
Boomlay, boomlay, boomlay, boom,
Boomlay, boomlay, boomlay, boom,
Boomlay, boomlay, boomlay, boom,
Boomlay, boomlay, boomlay,
BOOM."
Oh, rare was the revel, and well worth while
That made those glowering witch-men smile.

*With a touch
of negro dia-
lect, and as
rapidly as
possible to-
ward the end*

*Slow philo-
sophic calm*

III—THE HOPE OF THEIR RELIGION

A good old Negro in the slums of the town
Preached at a sister for her velvet gown.
Howled at a brother for his low-down ways,
His prowling, guzzling, sneak-thief days.
Beat on the Bible till he wore it out
Starting the jubilee revival shout.
And some had visions, as they stood on chairs,
And sang of Jacob, and the golden stairs.
And they all repented, a thousand strong,
From their stupor and savagery and sin and wrong,
And slammed with their hymn-books till they shook the

*Heavy bass.
With a literal
imitation of
camp-meet-
ing racket
and trance*

room
 With "Glory, glory, glory,"
 And "Boom, boom, BOOM."
 THEN I SAW THE CONGO, CREEPING THROUGH THE BLACK,
 CUTTING THROUGH THE JUNGLE WITH A GOLDEN TRACK,
 And the gray sky opened like a new-rent veil
 And showed the apostles with their coats
 of mail.
 In bright white steel they were seated round,
 And their fire-eyes watched where the Congo wound.
 And the twelve Apostles, from their thrones on high,
 Thrilled all the forest with their heavenly cry:
 "Mumbo-Jumbo will die in the jungle;
 Never again will he hoo-doo you,
 Never again will he hoo-doo you."
 Then along that river, a thousand miles,
 The vine-snared trees fell down in files.
 Pioneer angels cleared the way
 For a Congo paradise, for babes at play,
 For sacred capitals, for temples clean.
 Gone were the skull-faced witch-men lean;
 There, where the wild ghost-gods had wailed,
 A million boats of the angels sailed
 With oars of silver, and prows of blue,
 And silken pennants that the sun shone through.
 'Twas a land transfigured, 'twas a new creation.
 Oh, a singing wind swept the Negro nation,
 And on through the backwoods clearing flew:—
 "Mumbo-Jumbo is dead in the jungle.
 Never again will he hoo-doo you.
 Never again will he hoo-doo you."

*Exactly as in
 the first sec-
 tion. Begin
 with terror
 and power,
 and with joy*

*Sung to the
 tune of
 "Hark, ten
 thousand
 harps and
 voices"*

*With grow-
 ing delibera-
 tion and joy*

*In a rather
 high key—as
 delicately as
 possible*

*To the tune
 of "Hark,
 ten thousand
 harps and
 voices"*

Redeemed were the forests, the beasts and the men,

Ballads

And only the vulture dared again
By the far lone mountains of the moon
To cry, in the silence, the Congo tune:
"Mumbo-Jumbo will hoo-doo you,
Mumbo-Jumbo will hoo-doo you.
Mumbo . . . Jumbo . . . will . . . hoo-doo . . . you."

*Dying down
into a pene-
trating,
terrified
whisper*

VACHEL LINDSAY

LORD RANDAL

"O WHERE ha'e ye been, Lord Randal, my son?
O where ha'e ye been, my handsome young man?"
"I ha'e been to the wild wood; mother, make my bed soon;
For I'm weary wi' hunting, and fain wald lie down."

"Where gat ye your dinner, Lord Randal, my son?
Where gat ye your dinner, my handsome young man?"
"I dined wi' my true-love; mother, make my bed soon;
For I'm weary wi' hunting, and fain wald lie down."

"What gat ye to your dinner, Lord Randal, my son?
What gat ye to your dinner, my handsome young man?"
"I gat eels boiled in broo'; mother, make my bed soon;
For I'm weary wi' hunting, and fain wald lie down."

"What became of your bloodhounds, Lord Randal, my
son?
What became of your bloodhounds, my handsome young
man?"

"O they swelled and they died; mother, make my bed
soon;

For I'm weary wi' hunting, and fain wald lie down."

"O I fear ye are poisoned, Lord Randal, my son!
I fear ye are poisoned, my handsome young man!"
"Oh yes! I am poisoned; mother, make my bed soon;
For I'm sick at the heart, and I fain wald lie down."

ANON

EDWARD, EDWARD

"WHY does your brand sae drop wi' blude,
Edward, Edward?
Why does your brand sae drop wi' blude,
And why sae sad gang ye, O?"—
"O I hae kill'd my hawk sae gude,
Mither, mither;
O I hae kill'd my hawk sae gude,
And I had nae mair but he, O."

"Your hawk's blude was never sae red,
Edward, Edward;
Your hawk's blude was never sae red,
My dear son, I tell thee, O."—
"O I hae kill'd my red-roan steed,
Mither, mither;
O I hae kill'd my red-roan steed
That erst was sae fair and free, O."

"Your steed was auld, and ye hae got mair,
Edward, Edward;
Your steed was auld, and ye hae got mair;
Some other dule ye dree, O."
"O I hae kill'd my father dear,
Mither, mither;
O I hae kill'd my father dear,
Alas, and wae is me, O!"

Ballads

"And whatten penance will ye dree for that,
Edward, Edward?

Whatten penance will ye dree for that?

My dear son, now tell me, O."—

"I'll set my feet in yonder boat,

Mither, mither;

I'll set my feet in yonder boat,

And I'll fare over the sea, O."

"And what will ye do wi' your tow'rs and your ha',
Edward, Edward?

And what will ye do wi' your tow'rs and your ha',

That were sae fair to see, O?"—

"I'll let them stand till they doun fa',

Mither, mither;

I'll let them stand till they doun fa',

For here never mair maun I be, O."

"And what will ye leave to your bairns and your wife
Edward, Edward?

And what will ye leave to your bairns and your wife,

When ye gang owre the sea, O?"—

"The world's room: let them beg through life,

Mither, mither;

The world's room: let them beg through life;

For them never mair will I see, O."

"And what will ye leave to your ain mither dear,
Edward Edward?

And what will ye leave to your ain mither dear,

My dear son, now tell me, O?"—

"The curse of hell frae me sall ye bear,

Mither, mither;

The curse of hell frae me sall ye bear:

Sic counsels ye gave to me, O!"

ANON

THE RIME OF
THE ANCIENT MARINER

PART I

It is an ancient Mariner,
And he stoppeth one of three.
'By thy long grey beard and glittering eye,
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?

An ancient
Mariner
meeteth three
gallants
bidden to a
wedding feast,
and detaineth
one.

The Bridegroom's doors are open'd wide,
And I am next of kin;
The guests are met, the feast is set:
May'st hear the merry din.'

He holds him with his skinny hand,
'There was a ship,' quoth he.
'Hold off! unhand me, grey-beard loon!
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

He holds him with his glittering eye—
The Wedding-Guest stood still,
And listens like a three years' child:
The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding-
Guest is spell-
bound by the
eye of the old
seafaring man,
and con-
strained to
hear his tale.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone:
He cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

'The ship was cheer'd, the harbour clear'd,
Merrily did we drop

Ballads

The Mariner
tells how the
ship sailed
southward with
a good wind
and fair
weather, till
it reached
the Line.

Below the kirk, below the hill,
Below the lighthouse top.

The Sun came up upon the left,
Out of the sea came hel
And he shone bright, and on the right
Went down into the sea.

Higher and higher every day,
Till over the mast at noon—'
The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The Wedding-
Guest heareth
the bridal
music; but the
Mariner con-
tinueth his tale.

The bride hath paced into the hall,
Red as a rose is she;
Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

The ship
driven by a
storm toward
the South Pole.

'And now the Storm-blast came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong:
He struck with his o'ertaking wings,
And chased us south along.

With sloping masts and dipping prow,
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roar'd the blast,
And southward aye we fled.

And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold:
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

And through the drifts the snowy clifts
Did send a dismal sheen:
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—
The ice was all between.

The land of
ice, and of
fearful sounds,
where no living
thing was
to be seen

The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around:
It crack'd and growl'd, and roar'd and howl'd,
Like noises in a swound!

At length did cross an Albatross,
Thorough the fog it came;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hail'd it in God's name.

Till a great
sea-bird, called
the Albatross,
came through
the snow-fog,
and was re-
ceived with
great joy and
hospitality.

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
And round and round it flew.
The ice did split with a thunder-fit;
The helmsman steer'd us through!

And a good south wind sprung up behind;
The Albatross did follow,
And every day, for food or play,
Came to the mariners' hollo!

And lo! the
Albatross
proveth a bird
of good omen,
and followeth
the ship as it
returned north-
ward through
fog and float-
ing ice.

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
It perch'd for vespers nine;
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,
Glimmer'd the white moonshine.'

Ballads

The ancient
Mariner in-
hospitably
killeth the
pious bird of
good omen.

'God save thee, ancient Mariner,
From the fiends, that plague thee thus!—
Why look'st thou so?'—'With my crossbow
I shot the Albatross.

PART II

'The Sun now rose upon the right;
Out of the sea came he,
Still hid in mist, and on the left
Went down into the sea.

And the good south wind still blew behind,
But no sweet bird did follow,
Nor any day for food or play
Came to the mariners' hollo!

His shipmates
cry out against
the ancient
Mariner for
killing the bird
of good luck.

And I had done a hellish thing,
And it would work 'em woe:
For all averr'd I had kill'd the bird
That made the breeze to blow.
Ah wretch! said they, the bird to slay,
That made the breeze to blow!

But when the
fog cleared off,
they justify the
same, and thus
make them-
selves accom-
plices in the
crime.

Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
The glorious Sun uprist:
Then all averr'd I had kill'd the bird
That brought the fog and mist.
'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,
That bring the fog and mist.

The fair breeze
continues; the
ship enters the
Pacific Ocean,
and sails north-
ward, even till
it reaches the
Line.

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow follow'd free;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

Ballads

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,
'Twas sad as sad could be;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea!

The ship hath
been suddenly
becalm'd.

All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody Sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

Water, water, everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, everywhere
Nor any drop to drink.

And the Albatross
begins to
be avenged.

The very deep did rot: O Christ!
That ever this should be!
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danced at night;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue, and white.

And some in dreams assurèd were
Of the Spirit that plagued us so;
Nine fathom deep he had follow'd us
From the land of mist and snow.

A Spirit had
followed them,
one of the in-
visible inhabit-
ants of this
planet, neither
departed souls
nor angels;
concerning
whom the
learned Jew,
Josephus, and
the Platonic
Constantinopol-
itan, Michael
Psellus, may be
consulted. They
are very numer-
ous, and there
is no climate or
element without
one or more.

Ballads

The shipmates
in their sore
distress, would
fain throw the
whole guilt on
the ancient
Mariner in
sign whereof
they hang the
dead sea-bird
round his neck.

And every tongue, through utter drought,
Was wither'd at the root;
We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choked with soot.

Ah! well a-day! what evil looks
Had I from old and young!
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.

PART III

The ancient
Mariner be-
holdeth a sign
in the element
afar off.

'There passed a weary time. Each throat
Was parch'd, and glazed each eye.
A weary time! a weary time!
How glazed each weary eye!
When, looking westward, I beheld
A something in the sky.

At first it seem'd a little speck,
And then it seem'd a mist;
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!
And still it near'd and near'd:
As if it dodged a water-sprite,
It plunged, and tack'd and veer'd.

At its nearer
approach, it
seemeth him
to be a ship;
and at a dear
ransom he
freeth his
speech from
the bonds of
thirst.

With throats unslaked, with black lips
baked,
We could nor laugh nor wail;
Through utter drought all dumb we stood!
I bit my arm, I suck'd the blood,
And cried, A sail! a sail!

Ballads

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
Agape they heard me call:
Gramercy! they for joy did grin,
And all at once their breath drew in,
As they were drinking all.

A flash of joy;

Seel seel (I cried) she tacks no more!
Hither to work us weal—
Without a breeze, without a tide,
She steadies with upright keel!

And horror
follows. For
can it be a
ship that comes
onward without
wind or tide?

The western wave was all aflame,
The day was wellnigh done!
Almost upon the western wave
Rested the broad, bright Sun;
When that strange shape drove suddenly
Betwixt us and the Sun.

And straight the Sun was fleck'd with bars
(Heaven's Mother send us grace!),
As if through a dungeon-grate he peer'd
With broad and burning face.

It seemeth him
but the skele-
ton of a ship.

Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)
How fast she nears and nears!
Are those her sails that glance in the Sun,
Like restless gossameres?

And its ribs
are seen as
bars on the
face of the
setting Sun.
The Spectre-
Woman and her
Death-mate,
and no other,
on board the
skeleton ship.
Like vessel,
like crew!

Are those her ribs through which the Sun
Did peer, as through a grate?
And is that Woman all her crew?
Is that a Death? and are there two?
Is Death that Woman's mate?

Ballads

Death and
Life-in-Death
have diced for
the ship's crew,
and she (the
latter) winneth
the ancient
Mariner.

Her lips were red, her looks were free,
Her locks were yellow as gold:
Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The Nightmare Life-in-Death was she,
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

The naked hulk alongside came,
And the twain were casting dice;
"The game is done! I've won! I've won!"
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

No twilight
within the
courts of the
Sun.

The Sun's rim dips; the stars rush out:
At one stride comes the dark;
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
Off shot the spectre-bark.

At the rising
of the Moon,

We listen'd and look'd sideways up!
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seem'd to sip!
The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steersman's face by his lamp gleam'd
white;
From the sails the dew did drip--
Till clomb above the eastern bar
The hornèd Moon, with one bright star
Within the nether tip.

One after
another,

One after one, by the star-dogg'd Moon,
Too quick for groan or sigh,
Each turn'd his face with a ghastly pang,
And cursed me with his eye.

Four times fifty living men
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan),

Ballads

With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropp'd down one by one.

The souls did from their bodies fly—
They fled to bliss or woe!
And every soul, it pass'd me by
Like the whizz of my crossbow!

His ship-
mates dropp
down
dead.

But Life-in-
Death begins
her work on
the ancient
Mariner.

PART IV

'I fear thee, ancient Mariner!
I fear thy skinny hand!
And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
As is the ribb'd sea-sand.

The Wedding-
Guest feareth
that a spirit
is talking to
him.

I fear thee and thy glittering eye,
And thy skinny hand so brown.'—
'Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest!
This body dropt not down.

But the an-
cient Mariner
assureth him
of his bodily
life, and pro-
ceedeth to re-
late his horri-
ble penance.

Alone, alone, all, all alone
Alone on a wide, wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

The many men, so beautiful
And they all dead did lie:
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I.

He despiseth
the creatures
of the calm.

I look'd upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away;
I look'd upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.

And envieth
that they
should live,
and so many
lie dead.

Ballads

I look'd to heaven, and tried to pray;
But or ever a prayer had gusht,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat;
But the sky and the sea, and the sea and the
sky,
Lay like a load on my weary eye,
And the dead were at my feet.

But the curse
liveth for him
in the eye of
the dead men.

The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
Nor rot nor reek did they:
The look with which they look'd on me
Had never pass'd away.

An orphan's curse would drag to hell
A spirit from on high;
But oh! more horrible than that
Is the curse in a dead man's eye!
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
And yet I could not die.

In his lonell-
ness and
fixedness he
yearneth
towards the
journeying
Moon, and the
stars that still

The moving Moon went up the sky,
And nowhere did abide;
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside—

sojourn, yet still move onward; and everywhere the blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed rest and their native country and their own natural homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly expected, and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival.

Her beams bemock'd the sultry main,
Like April hoar-frost spread;

Ballads

But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
The charmed water burnt away
A still and awful red.

Beyond the shadow of the ship,
I watch'd the water-snakes:
They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they rear'd, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship
I watch'd their rich attire:
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coil'd and swam; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

O happy living things! no tongue
Their beauty might declare:
A spring of love gush'd from my heart,
And I bless'd them unaware:
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I bless'd them unaware.

The selfsame moment I could pray;
And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea.

By the light
of the Moon
he beholdeth
God's crea-
tures of the
great calm.

Their beauty
and their
happiness,

He blesteth
them in his
heart.

The spell be-
gins to break.

PART V

'O sleep! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole!
To Mary Queen the praise be given!
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,
That slid into my soul.

Ballads

By grace of
the holy
Mother, the
ancient
Mariner is
refreshed
with rain.

The silly buckets on the deck,
That had so long remain'd,
I dreamt that they were fill'd with dew;
And when I awoke, it rain'd.

My lips were wet, my throat was cold.
My garments all were dank;
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs:
I was so light—almost
I thought that I had died in sleep,
And was a blessèd ghost.

He heareth
sounds and
seeth strange
sights and
commotions
in the sky and
the element.

And soon I heard a roaring wind:
It did not come anear;
But with its sound it shook the sails,
That were so thin and sere.

The upper air burst into life;
And a hundred fire-flags sheen;
To and fro they were hurried about!
And to and fro, and in and out,
The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did roar more loud,
And the sails did sigh like sedge;
And the rain pour'd down from one black
cloud;
The Moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
The Moon was at its side;
Like waters shot from some high crag,

Ballads

The lightning fell with never a jag,
A river steep and wide.

The loud wind never reach'd the ship,
Yet now the ship moved on!
Beneath the lightning and the Moon
The dead men gave a groan.

They groan'd, they stirr'd, they all uprose,
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes;
It had been strange, even in a dream,
To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsman steer'd, the ship moved on;
Yet never a breeze up-blew;
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
Where they were wont to do;
They raised their limbs like lifeless tools—
We were a ghastly crew.

The body of my brother's son
Stood by me, knee to knee:
The body and I pull'd at one rope,
But he said naught to me.'

'I fear thee, ancient Mariner!
'Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest:
'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,
Which to their corpses came again,
But a troop of spirits blest:

For when it dawn'd—they dropp'd their
arms,
And cluster'd round the mast;

The bodies of
the ship's crew
are inspired,
and the ship
moves on;

But not by
the souls of
the men, nor
by demons of
earth or middle
air, but by a
blessed troop
of angelic
spirits, sent
down by the
invocation of
the guardian
saint.

Ballads

Sweet sounds rose slowly through their
mouths,
And from their bodies pass'd.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the Sun;
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mix'd, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the skylark sing;
Sometimes all little birds that are,
How they seem'd to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning!

And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute;
And now it is an angel's song,
That makes the Heavens be mute.

It ceased; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

The lonesome
Spirit from the
South Pole
carries on the
ship as far as
the Line, in
obedience to
the angelic
troop, but still
requireth
vengeance.

Till noon we quietly sail'd on,
Yet never a breeze did breathe:
Slowly and smoothly went the ship,
Moved onward from beneath.

Under the keel nine fathom deep,
From the land of mist and snow,
The Spirit slid: and it was he

That made the ship to go.
The sails at noon left off their tune,
And the ship stood still also.

The Sun, right up above the mast,
Had fix'd her to the ocean:
But in a minute she 'gan stir,
With a short uneasy motion—
Backwards and forwards half her length
With a short uneasy motion.

Then like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound:
It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swoond.

How long in that same fit I lay,
I have not to declare;
But ere my living life return'd,
I heard, and in my soul discern'd
Two voices in the air.

"Is it he?" quoth one, "is this the man?
By Him who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full low
The harmless Albatross.

The Spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,
He loved the bird that loved the man
Who shot him with his bow."

The other was a softer voice,
As soft as honey-dew:

The Polar Spirit's fellow demons, the invisible inhabitants of the element, take part in his wrong; and two of them relate, one to the other, that penance long and heavy for the ancient Mariner hath been accorded to the Polar Spirit, who returneth southward.

Ballads

Quoth he, "The man hath penance done,
And penance more will do."

PART VI

First Voice:

"But tell me, tell me! speak again,
Thy soft response renewing—
What makes that ship drive on so fast?
What is the Ocean doing?"

Second Voice:

"Still as a slave before his lord,
The Ocean hath no blast;
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the Moon is cast—

If he may know which way to go;
For she guides him smooth or grim.
See, brother, see! how graciously
She looketh down on him."

First Voice:

"But why drives on that ship so fast,
Without or wave or wind?"

Second Voice:

"The air is cut away before,
And closes from behind.

Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!
Or we shall be belated:
For slow and slow that ship will go,
When the Mariner's trance is abated."

The Mariner
hath been cast
into a trance;
for the angelic
power causeth
the vessel to
drive north-
ward faster
than human
life could
endure.

Ballads

I woke, and we were sailing on
As in a gentle weather:
'Twas night, calm night, the Moon was high,
The dead men stood together.

The super-
natural motion
is retarded;
the Mariner
awakes, and
his penance
begins anew.

All stood together on the deck,
For a charnel-dungeon fitter:
All fix'd on me their stony eyes,
That in the Moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they died,
Had never pass'd away:
I could not draw my eyes from theirs,
Nor turn them up to pray.

And now this spell was snap'd: once more
I view'd the ocean green,
And look'd far forth, yet little saw
Of what had else been seen—

The curse is
finally
expiated.

Like one that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turn'd round, walks on,
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breathed a wind on me,
Nor sound nor motion made:
Its path was not upon the sea,
In ripple or in shade.

It raised my hair, it fann'd my cheek
Like a meadow-gale of spring—

Ballads

It mingled strangely with my fears,
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,
Yet she sail'd softly too;
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—
On me alone it blew.

And the an-
cient Mariner
beholdeth his
native country.

O dream of joy! is this indeed
The lighthouse top I see?
Is this the hill? is this the kirk?
Is this mine own countree?

We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,
And I with sobs did pray—
O let me be awake, my God!
Or let me sleep alway.

The harbour-bay was clear as glass,
So smoothly it was strewn!
And on the bay the moonlight lay,
And the shadow of the Moon.

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less
That stands above the rock:
The moonlight steep'd in silentness
The steady weathercock.

The angelic
spirits leave the
dead bodies,

And the bay was white with silent light
Till rising from the same,
Full many shapes, that shadows were,
In crimson colours came.

A little distance from the prow
Those crimson shadows were:

Ballads

I turn'd my eyes upon the deck—
O Christ! what saw I there!

*And appear in
their own
forms of light.*

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And, by the holy rood!
A man all light, a seraph-man,
On every corse there stood.

This seraph-band, each waved his hand:
It was a heavenly sight!
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light;

This seraph-band, each waved his hand,
No voice did they impart—
No voice; but O, the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars,
I heard the Pilot's cheer;
My head was turn'd perforce away,
And I saw a boat appear.

The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,
I heard them coming fast:
Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy
The dead men could not blast.

I saw a third—I heard his voice:
It is the Hermit good!
He singeth loud his godly hymns
That he makes in the wood.
He'll shrive my soul, he'll wash away
The Albatross's blood.

Ballads

PART VII

The Hermit
of the Wood.

"This Hermit good lives in that wood
Which slopes down to the sea.
How loudly his sweet voice he rears!
He loves to talk with marineres
That come from a far countree.

He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve—
He hath a cushion plump.
It is the moss that wholly hides
The rotted old oak-stump.

The skiff-boat near'd: I heard them talk,
"Why, this is strange, I trow!
Where are those lights so many and fair,
That signal made but now?"

Approacheth
the ship with
wonder.

"Strange, by my faith!" the Hermit said—
"And they answer'd not our cheer!
The planks look warp'd! and see those sails,
How thin they are and sere!
I never saw aught like to them,
Unless perchance it were

Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
My forest-brook along;
When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,
And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,
That eats the she-wolf's young."

"Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look—
(The Pilot made reply)
I am a-fear'd."—"Push on, push on!"
Said the Hermit cheerily.

Ballads

The boat came closer to the ship,
But I nor spake nor stirr'd;
The boat came close beneath the ship,
And straight a sound was heard.

Under the water it rumbled on
Still louder and more dread:
It reach'd the ship, it split the bay;
The ship went down like lead

The ship sud-
denly sinketh.

Stunn'd by that loud and dreadful sound,
Which sky and ocean smote,
Like one that hath been seven days drown'd
My body lay afloat;
But swift as dreams, myself I found
Within the Pilot's boat.

The ancient
Mariner is
saved in the
Pilot's boat.

Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
The boat spun round and round;
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.

I moved my lips—the Pilot shriek'd
And fell down in a fit;
The holy Hermit raised his eyes,
And pray'd where he did sit.

I took the oars: the Pilot's boy,
Who now doth crazy go,
Laugh'd loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro.
"Ha! ha!" quoth he, "full plain I see
The Devil knows how to row."

Ballads

The ancient
Mariner
earnestly en-
treateth the
Hermit to
shrieve him;
and the pen-
ance of life
falls on him.

And now, all in my own countree,
I stood on the firm land!
The Hermit stepp'd forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

"O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man!"
The Hermit cross'd his brow.
"Say quick," quoth he, "I bid thee say—
What manner of man art thou?"

And ever
and anon
throughout
his future life
an agony
constraineth
him to travel
from land to
land;

Forthwith this frame of mine was wrench'd
With a woful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale;
And then it left me free.

Since then, at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns:
And till my ghastly tale is told,
This heart within me burns.

I pass, like night, from land to land;
I have strange power of speech;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me:
To him my tale I teach.

What loud uproar bursts from that door!
The wedding-guests are there:
But in the garden-bower the bride
And bride-maids singing are:
And hark, the little vesper bell,
Which biddeth me to prayer!

O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide, wide sea:

So lonely 'twas, that God Himself
Scarce seemèd there to be.

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company!—

To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay!

Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

And to teach,
by his own
example, love
and reverence
to all things
that God
made and
loveth.

He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.'

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone: and now the Wedding-Guest
Turn'd from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunn'd,
And is of sense forlorn:
A sadder and a wiser man
He rose the morrow morn.

Ballads

THE SPANISH ARMADO

SOME years of late, in eighty-eight,
As I do well remember,
It was, some say, the middle of May,
And some say in September,
And some say in September.

The Spanish train launched forth amain,
With many a fine bravado,
Their (as they thought, but it proved not)
Invincible Armado,
Invincible Armado.

There was a man that dwelt in Spain
Who shot well with a gun a,
Don Pedro hight, as black a wight
As the Knight of the Sun a,
As the Knight of the Sun a.

King Philip made him Admiral,
And bid him not to stay a,
But to destroy both man and boy
And so to come away a,
And so to come away a.

Their navy was well victualled
With biscuit, pease, and bacon,
They brought two ships, well fraught with whip
But I think they were mistaken,
But I think they were mistaken.

Their men were young, munition strong,
And to do us more harm a,

Ballads

They thought it meet to join their fleet
All with the Prince of Parma,
All with the Prince of Parma.

They coasted round about our land,
And so came in by Dover:
But we had men set on 'em then,
And threw the rascals over,
And threw the rascals over.

The Queen was then at Tilbury,
What could we more desire a?
Sir Francis Drake for her sweet sake
Did set them all on fire a,
Did set them all on fire a.

Then straight they fled by sea and land,
That one man killed threescore a,
And had not they all run away,
In truth he had killed more a,
In truth he had killed more a.

Then let them neither bray nor boast,
But if they come again a,
Let them take heed they do not speed
As they did you know when a,
As they did you know when a.

ANON

THE THREE BUSHES

(An incident from the "*Historia mei Temporis*" of
the Abbe Michel de Bourdeille)

SAID lady once to lover,
"None can rely upon
A love that lacks its proper food;
And if your love were gone
How could you sing those songs of love?
I should be blamed, young man."
O my dear, O my dear.

"Have no lit candles in your room,"
That lovely lady said,
"That I at midnight by the clock
May creep into your bed,
For if I saw myself creep in
I think I should drop dead."
O my dear, O my dear.

"I love a man in secret,
Dear chambermaid," said she.
"I know that I must drop down dead
If he stop loving me,
Yet what could I but drop down dead
If I lost my chastity?"
O my dear, O my dear.

"So you must lie beside him
And let him think me there,
And maybe we are all the same
Where no candles are,
And maybe we are all the same

That strip the body bare."

O my dear, O my dear.

But no dogs barked, and midnights chimed,
And through the chime she'd say,
"That was a lucky thought of mine,
My lover looked so gay";
But heaved a sigh if the chambermaid
Looked half asleep all day.

O my dear, O my dear.

"No, not another song," said he,
"Because my lady came
A year ago for the first time
At midnight to my room,
And I must lie between the sheets
When the clock begins to chime."

O my dear, O my dear.

"A laughing, crying, sacred song,
A leching song," they said.
Did ever men hear such a song?
No, but that day they did.
Did ever man ride such a race?
No, not until he rode.

O my dear, O my dear.

But when his horse had put its hoof
Into a rabbit-hole
He dropped upon his head and died.
His lady saw it all
And dropped and died thereon, for she
Loved him with her soul.

O my dear, O my dear.

Ballads

The chambermaid lived long, and took
Their graves into her charge,
And there two bushes planted
That when they had grown large
Seemed sprung from but a single root
So did their roses merge.

O my dear, O my dear.

When she was old and dying,
The priest came where she was;
She made a full confession.
Long looked he in her face,
And O he was a good man
And understood her case.

O my dear, O my dear.

He bade them take and bury her
Beside her lady's man,
And set a rose-tree on her grave,
And now none living can,
When they have plucked a rose there,
Know where its roots began.

O my dear, O my dear.

W. B. YEATS

THE BLESSED DAMOZEL

THE blessed damozel leaned out
From the gold bar of heaven;
Her eyes were deeper than the depth
Of waters stilled at even;
She had three lilies in her hand,
And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No wrought flowers did adorn,
But a white rose of Mary's gift,
For service meetly worn;
Her hair that lay along her back
Was yellow like ripe corn.

Her seemed she scarce had been a day
One of God's choristers;
The wonder was not yet quite gone
From that still look of hers;
Albeit, to them she left, her day
Had counted as ten years.

(To *one* it is ten years of years.
. . . Yet now, and in this place,
Surely she leaned o'er me—her hair
Fell all about my face . . .
Nothing: the autumn fall of leaves.
The whole year sets apace.)

It was the rampart of God's house
That she was standing on;
By God built over the sheer depth
The which is Space begun;
So high, that looking downward thence
She scarce could see the sun.

It lies in heaven, across the flood
Of ether, as a bridge.
Beneath the tides of day and night
With flame and darkness ridge
The void, as low as where this earth
Spins like a fretful midge.

Ballads

Around her, lovers, newly met
 'Mid deathless love's acclaims,
Spoke evermore among themselves
 Their heart-remembered names;
And the souls mounting up to God
 Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bowed herself and stooped
 Out of the circling charm;
Until her bosom must have made
 The bar she leaned on warm,
And the lilies lay as if asleep
 Along her bended arm.

From the fixed place of heaven she saw
 Time like a pulse shake fierce
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still strove
 Within the gulf to pierce
Its path; and now she spoke as when
 The stars sang in their spheres.

The sun was gone now; the curled moon
 Was like a little feather
Fluttering far down the gulf; and now
 She spoke through the still weather.
Her voice was like the voice the stars
 Had when they sang together.

(Ah, sweet! Even now, in that bird's song,
 Strove not her accents there,
Fain to be harkened? When those bells
 Possessed the mid-day air,
Strove not her steps to reach my side
 Down all the echoing stair?)

'I wish that he were come to me,
For he will come,' she said.
'Have I not prayed in heaven?—on earth,
Lord, Lord, has he not prayed?
Are not two prayers a perfect strength?
And shall I feel afraid?

'When round his head the aureole clings,
And he is clothed in white,
I'll take his hand and go with him
To the deep wells of light;
As unto a stream we will step down,
And bathe there in God's sight.

'We two will stand beside that shrine,
Occult, withheld, untrod,
Whose lamps are stirred continually
With prayers sent up to God;
And see our old prayers, granted, melt
Each like a little cloud.

'We two will lie i' the shadow of
That living mystic tree
Within whose secret growth the Dove
Is sometimes felt to be,
While every leaf that His plumes touch
Saith His Name audibly.

'And I myself will teach to him,
I myself, lying so,
The songs I sing here; which his voice
Shall pause in, hushed and slow,
And find some knowledge at each pause,
Or some new thing to know.'

Ballads

(Alas! We two, we two, thou say'st!
Yea, one wast thou with me
That once of old. But shall God lift
To endless unity
The soul whose likeness with thy soul
Was but its love for thee?)

'We two,' she said, 'will seek the groves
Where the lady Mary is,
With her five handmaidens, whose names
Are five sweet symphonies,
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,
Margaret, and Rosalys.

'Circlewise sit they, with bound locks
And foreheads garlanded;
Into the fine cloth white like flame
Weaving the golden thread,
To fashion the birth-robcs for them
Who are just born, being dead.

'He shall fear, haply, and be dumb;
Then will I lay my check
To his, and tell about our love,
Not once abashed or weak;
And the dear Mother will approve
My pride, and let me speak.

'Herself shall bring us, hand in hand;
To Him round whom all souls
Kneel, the clear-ranged unnumbered heads
Bowed with their aureoles;
And angels meeting us shall sing
To their citherns and citoles.

'There will I ask of Christ the Lord
Thus much for him and me—
Only to live as once on earth
With Love, only to be,
As then awhile, forever now,
Together, I and he.'

She gazed and listened and then said,
Less sad of speech than mild—
'All this is when he comes.' She ceased.
The light thrilled toward her, filled
With angels in strong, level flight.
Her eyes prayed, and she smiled.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their path
Was vague in distant spheres;
And then she cast her arms along
The golden barriers,
And laid her face between her hands,
And wept. (I heard her tears.)

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

SIR GALAHAD

My good blade carves the casques of men,
My tough lance thrusteth sure,
My strength is as the strength of ten
Because my heart is pure.
The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,
The hard brands shiver on the steel,
The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and fly,
The horse and rider reel:

Ballads

They reel, they roll in clanging lists,
And when the tide of combat stands,
Perfume and flowers fall in showers,
That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies bend
On whom their favours fall!
For them I battle till the end,
To save from shame and thrall:
But all my heart is drawn above,
My knees are bow'd in crypt and shrine:
I never felt the kiss of love,
Nor maiden's hand in mine.
More bounteous aspects on me beam,
Me mightier transports move and thrill;
So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer
A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes,
A light before me swims,
Between dark stems the forest glows,
I hear a noise of hymns:
Then by some secret shrine I ride;
I hear a voice, but none are there;
The stalls are void, the doors are wide,
The tapers burning fair.
Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,
The silver vessels sparkle clean,
The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,
And solemn chaunts resound between.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres
I find a magic bark;
I leap on board: no helmsman steers:
I float till all is dark.

A gentle sound, an awful light!
Three angels bear the holy Grail;
With folded feet, in stoles of white,
On sleeping wings they sail.
Ah, blessed vision! blood of God!
My spirit beats her mortal bars,
As down dark tides the glory slides,
And star-like mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne
Thro' dreaming towns I go,
The cock crows o'er the Christmas morn,
The streets are dumb with snow.
The tempest crackles on the leads,
And, ringing, spins from brand and mail;
But o'er the dark a glory spreads,
And gilds the driving hail.
I leave the plain, I climb the height;
No branchy thicket shelter yields;
But blessed forms in whistling storms
Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.

A maiden knight—to me is given
Such hope, I know not fear;
I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
That often meet me here.
I muse on joy that will not cease,
Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
Pure lilies of eternal peace,
Whose odours haunt my dreams;
And, stricken by an angel's hand,
This mortal armour that I wear,
This weight and size, this heart and eyes,
Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

Ballads

The clouds are broken in the sky,
And thro' the mountain-walls
A rolling organ-harmony
Swells up, and shakes and falls.
Then move the trees, the copses nod,
Wings flutter, voices hover clear:
"O just and faithful knight of God!
Ride on! the prize is near."
So pass I hostel, hall, and grange;
By bridge and ford, by park and pale,
All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,
Until I find the holy Grail.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

From THE BALLAD OF READING GAOL

He did not wear his scarlet coat,
For blood and wine are red,
And blood and wine were on his hands
When they found him with the dead,
The poor dead woman whom he loved,
And murdered in her bed.

He walked amongst the Trial Men
In a suit of shabby grey;
A cricket cap was on his head,
And his step seemed light and gay;
But I never saw a man who looked
So wistfully at the day.

I never saw a man who looked
 With such a wistful eye
Upon that little tent of blue
 Which prisoners call the sky,
And at every drifting cloud that went
 With sails of silver by.

I walked, with other souls in pain,
 Within another ring,
And was wondering if the man had done
 A great or little thing,
When a voice behind me whispered low,
 '*That fellow's got to swing.*'

.

Six weeks our guardsman walked the yard,
 In the suit of shabby grey:
His cricket cap was on his head,
 And his step seemed light and gay,
But I never saw a man who looked
 So wistfully at the day.

I never say a man who looked
 With such a wistful eye
Upon that little tent of blue
 Which prisoners call the sky,
And at every wandering cloud that trailed
 Its ravelled fleeces by.

He did not wring his hands, as do
 Those witless men who dare
To try to rear the changeling Hope
 In the cave of black Despair:
He only looked upon the sun,
 And drank the morning air.

Ballads

He did not wring his hands nor weep,
Nor did he peck or pine,
But he drank the air as though it held
Some healthful anodyne;
With open mouth he drank the sun
As though it had been wine!

And I and all the souls in pain,
Who tramped the other ring,
Forgot if we ourselves had done
A great or little thing,
And watched with gaze of dull amaze
The man who had to swing.

And strange it was to see him pass
With a step so light and gay,
And strange it was to see him look
So wistfully at the day,
And strange it was to think that he
Had such a debt to pay.

.
For oak and elm have pleasant leaves
That in the spring-time shoot:
But grim to see is the gallows-tree,
With its adder-bitten root,
And, green or dry, a man must die
Before it bears its fruit!

The loftiest place is that seat of grace
For which all worldlings try:
But who would stand in hempen band
Upon a scaffold high,
And through a murderer's collar take
His last look at the sky?

It is 'sweet to dance to violins
When Love and Life are fair:
To dance to flutes, to dance to lutes
Is delicate and rare:
But it is not sweet with nimble feet
To dance upon the air!

So with curious eyes and sick surmise
We watched him day by day,
And wondered if each one of us
Would end the self-same way,
For none can tell to what red Hell
His sightless soul may stray.

At last the dead man walked no more
Amongst the Trial Men,
And I knew that he was standing up
In the black dock's dreadful pen,
And that never would I see his face
In God's sweet world again.

Like two doomed ships that pass in storm
We had crossed each other's way:
But we made no sign, we said no word,
We had no word to say;
For we did not meet in the holy night,
But in the shameful day.

A prison wall was round us both,
Two outcast men we were:
The world had thrust us from its heart,
And God from out His care:
And the iron gin that waits for Sin
Had caught us in its snare.

In Debtors' Yard the stones are hard,
And the dripping wall is high,
So it was there he took the air
Beneath the leaden sky,
And by each side a Warder walked,
For fear the man might die.

Or else he sat with those who watched
His anguish night and day;
Who watched him when he rose to weep,
And when he crouched to pray;
Who watched him lest himself should rob
Their scaffold of its prey.

And twice a day he smoked his pipe,
And drank his quart of beer:
His soul was resolute, and held
No hiding-place for fear;
He often said that he was glad
The hangman's hands were near.

But why he said so strange a thing
No Warder dared to ask:
For he to whom a watcher's doom
Is given as his task,
Must set a lock upon his lips,
And make his face a mask.

Or else he might be moved, and try
To comfort or console:
And what should Human Pity do
Pent up in Murderers' Hole?
What word of grace in such a place
Could help a brother's soul?

We tore the tarry rope to shreds
With blunt and bleeding nails;
We rubbed the doors, and scrubbed the floors,
And cleaned the shining rails:
And, rank by rank, we soaped the plank,
And clattered with the pails.

We sewed the sacks, we broke the stones,
We turned the dusty drill:
We banged the tins, and bawled the hymns,
And sweated on the mill:
But in the heart of every man
Terror was lying still.

So still it lay that every day
Crawled like a weed-clogged wave:
And we forgot the bitter lot
That waits for fool and knave,
Till once, as we tramped in from work,
We passed an open grave.

With yawning mouth the yellow hole
Gaped for a living thing;
The very mud cried out for blood
To the thirsty asphaltic ring:
And we knew that ere one dawn grew fair
Some prisoner had to swing.

Right in we went, with soul intent
On Death and Dread and Doom:
The hangman, with his little bag,
Went shuffling through the gloom:
And each man trembled as he crept
Into his numbered tomb.

Ballads

That night the empty corridors
Were full of forms of Fear,
And up and down the iron town
Stole feet we could not hear,
And through the bars that hide the stars
White faces seemed to peer.

He lay as one who lies and dreams
In a pleasant meadow-land,
The watchers watched him as he slept,
And could not understand
How one could sleep so sweet a sleep
With a hangman close at hand.

But there is no sleep when men must weep
Who never yet have wept:
So we—the fool, the fraud, the knave—
That endless vigil kept,
And through each brain on hands of pain
Another's terror crept.

There is no chapel on the day
On which they hang a man:
The Chaplain's heart is far too sick,
Or his face is far too wan,
Or there is that written in his eyes
Which none should look upon.

So they kept us close till nigh on noon,
And then they rang the bell,
And the Warders with their jingling keys
Opened each listening cell,
And down the iron stair we tramped,
Each from his separate Hell.

Out into God's sweet air we went,
But not in wonted way,
For this man's face was white with fear,
And that man's face was grey.
And I never saw sad men who looked
So wistfully at the day.

I never saw sad men who looked
With such a wistful eye
Upon that little tent of blue
We prisoners called the sky,
And at every careless cloud that passed
In happy freedom by.

The Warders strutted up and down,
And kept their herd of brutes,
Their uniforms were spick and span,
And they wore their Sunday suits,
But we knew the work they had been at,
By the *quicklime* on their boots.

For where a grave had opened wide,
There was no grave at all:
Only a stretch of mud and sand
By the hideous prison-wall,
And a little heap of burning lime,
That the man should have his pall.

For three long years they will not sow
Or root or seedling there:
For three long years the unblest spot
Will sterile be and bare,
And look upon the wondering sky
With unreprouched stare.

Ballads

They think a murderer's heart would taint
Each simple seed they sow.
It is not true! God's kindly earth
Is kindlier than men know,
And the red rose would but blow more red,
The white rose whiter blow.

OSCAR WILDE

THE RAVEN

ONCE upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered weak
and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore,
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a
tapping,
As of someone gently rapping, rapping at my chamber
door.
“’Tis some visitor,” I muttered, “tapping at my chamber
door—
Only this, and nothing more.”

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December,
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon
the floor.
Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had sought to
borrow
From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost
Lenore—
For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name
Lenore—
Nameless here for evermore.

Ballads

And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple
curtain
Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt
before;
So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood
repeating,
“’Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber
door—
Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber
door;—
This it is, and nothing more.”

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no
longer,
“Sir,” said I, “or Madam, truly your forgiveness I im-
plore;
But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came
rapping,
And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber
door,
That I scarce was sure I heard you”—here I opened wide
the door;—
Darkness there, and nothing more.

Deep into the darkness peering, long I stood there, won-
dering, fearing,
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortals ever dared to
dream before;
But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no
token,
And the only word there spoken was the whispered word,
“Lenore!”
This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word,
“Lenore!”—
Merely this, and nothing more.

Ballads

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me
burning,
Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than before.
"Surely," said I, "surely that is something at my window
lattice:
Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore—
Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery explore;—
'Tis the wind and nothing more."

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt
and flutter,
In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days of
yore;
Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped
or stayed he;
But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber
door—
Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber
door—
Perched and sat, and nothing more.

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling,
By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it
wore.
"Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou," I said,
"art sure no craven,
Ghastly grim and ancient raven wandering from the
Nightly shore—
Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian
shore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

Ballads

Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse
so plainly,
Though its answer little meaning—little relevancy bore;
For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being
Ever yet was blest with seeing bird above his chamber
door—

Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his chamber
door,

With such name as "Nevermore."

But the Raven, sitting lonely on the placid bust, spoke
only

That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did
outpour.

Nothing further then he uttered—not a feather then he
fluttered—

Till I scarcely more than muttered, "Other friends have
flown before,

On the morrow *he* will leave me, as my hopes have flown
before."

Then the bird said, "Nevermore."

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken,
"Doubtless," said I, "what it utters is its only stock and
store,

Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful
Disaster

Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden
bore—

Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden bore
Of 'Never—nevermore'."

But the Raven still beguiling all my fancy into smiling,
Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird, and
bust and door;

Ballads

Then upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to tinkling
Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of
yore—

What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt and ominous
bird of yore

Meant in croaking, "Nevermore."

This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing
To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom's
core;

This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease reclin-
ing

On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamplight gloated
o'er,

But whose velvet violet lining with the lamplight gloating
o'er,

She shall press, ah, nevermore!

Then methought the air grew denser, perfumed from an
unseen censer

Swung by Seraphim whose footfalls tinkled on the tufted
floor.

"Wretch," I cried, "thy God hath lent thee—by these
angels he hath sent thee

Respite—respite and nepenthe, from the memories of
Lenore!

Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe and forget this lost
Lenore!"

Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or
devill—

Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee
here ashore,
Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land en-
chanted—
On this home by horror haunted—tell me truly, I im-
plore—
Is there—*is* there balm in Gilead?—tell me—tell me, I im-
plore!”

Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore.”

“Prophet!” said I, “thing of evil—prophet still, if bird or
devill
By that Heaven that bends above us—by that God we
both adore—
Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant
Aidenn,
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name
Lenore—
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name
Lenore.”

Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore.”

‘Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend,” I
shrieked, upstarting—
“Get thee back into the tempest and the Night’s Plu-
to-
nian shore!
Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath
spoken!
Leave my loneliness unbroken! quit the bust above my
door!
Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form
from off my door!”

Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore.”

The animals

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting
On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is
dreaming,
And the lamplight o'er him streaming throws his shadow
on the floor;
And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the
floor
Shall be lifted—nevermore!

EDGAR ALLAN POE

ANIMALS

I THINK I could turn and live with animals, they are so
placid and self-contained;
I stand and look at them long and long.
They do not sweat and whine about their condition;
They do not lie awake in the dark and weep for their sins;
They do not make me sick discussing their duty to God;
Not one is dissatisfied—not one is domed with the
mania of owning things;
Not one kneels to another, nor to his kind that lived
thousands of years ago;
Not one is respectable or industrious over the whole
earth.

WALT WHITMAN

TO A MOUSE

*On Turning Her Up in Her Nest with the Plough,
November, 1785*

WEE, sleekit, cow'rin', tim'rous beastie,
O what a panic's in thy breastie!
Thou need na start awa sae hasty,
 Wi' bickering brattle!
I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee
 Wi' murd'ring pattle!

I'm truly sorry man's dominion
Has broken Nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion
 Which makes thee startle
At me, thy poor earth-born companion,
 An' fellow-mortal!

I doubt na, whiles, but thou mayst thieve;
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!
A daimen-icker in a thrave
 'S a sma' request:
I'll get a blessin' wi' the lave,
 And never miss 't!

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin!
Its silly wa's the win's are strewin'!
An' naething, now, to big a new ane
 O' foggage green!
An' bleak December's winds ensuin',
 Baith snell an' keen!

The animals

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On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is
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And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the
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Its silly wa's the win's are strewin'!
An' naething, now, to big a new ane
O' foggage green!
An' bleak December's winds ensuin',
Baith snell an' keen!

The animals

Thou saw the fields laid bare and waste,
An' weary winter comin' fast,
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
 Thou thought to dwell,
Till crash! the cruel coulter past
 Out-thro' thy cell.

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble
Has cost thee mony a weary nibble!
Now thou's turn'd out, for a' thy trouble,
 But house or hald,
To thole the winter's sleety dribble,
 An' cranreuch cauld!

But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane,
In proving foresight may be vain:
The best laid schemes o' mice an' men
 Gang aft a-gley,
An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain
 For promis'd joy.

Still thou art blest compar'd wi' me!
The present only toucheth thee:
But oh! I backward cast my e'e
 On prospects drear!
An' forward tho' I canna see,
 I guess an' fear!

ROBERT BURNS

sleekit] sleek. *pattle]* plow-staff. *thrave]* an occasional ear in twenty-four sheaves. *big]* build. *snell]* bitter. *thole]* endure. *cranreuch]* hoarfrost. *no thy lane]* not alone. *a-gley]* astray.

A RUNNABLE STAG

WHEN the pods went pop on the broom, green broom,
And apples began to be golden-skin'd,
We harbour'd a stag in the Priory coomb,
And we feather'd his trail up-wind, up-wind,
We feather'd his trail up-wind—
A stag of warrant, a stag, a stag,
A runnable stag, a kingly crop,
Brow, bay and tray and three on top,
A stag, a runnable stag.

Then the huntsman's horn rang yap, yap, yap,
And "Forwards" we heard the harbourer shout;
But 'twas only a brocket that brok a gap
In the beechen underwood, driven out,
From the underwood antler'd out
By warrant and might of the stag, the stag,
The runnable stag, whose lordly mind
Was bent on sleep, though beam'd and tined
He stood, a runnable stag.

So we tufted the covert till afternoon
With Tinkerman's Pup and Bell-of-the-North;
And hunters were sulky and hounds out of tune
Before we tufted the right stag forth,
Before we tufted him forth,
The stag of warrant, the wily stag,
The runnable stag with his kingly crop,
Brow, bay and tray and three on top,
The royal and runnable stag.

It was Bell-of-the-North and Tinkerman's Pup
That stuck to the scent till the copse was drawn.

The animals

"Tally ho! tally ho!" and the hunt was up,
The tufters whipp'd and the pack laid on,
The resolute pack laid on,
And the stag of warrant away at last,
The runnable stag, the same, the same,
His hoofs on fire, his horns like flame,
A stag, a runnable stag.

"Let your gelding be: if you check or chide
He stumbles at once and you're out of the hunt;
For three hundred gentlemen, able to ride,
On hunters accustom'd to bear the brunt,
Accustom'd to bear the brunt,
Are after the runnable stag, the stag,
The runnable stag with his kingly crop,
Brow, bay and tray and three on top,
The right, the runnable stag."

By perilous paths in coomb and dell,
The heather, the rocks, and the river-bed,
The pace grew hot, for the scent lay well,
And a runnable stag goes right ahead,
The quarry went right ahead—
Ahead, ahead, and fast and far;
His antler'd crest, his cloven hoof,
Brow, bay and tray and three aloof,
The stag, the runnable stag.

For a matter of twenty miles and more,
By the densest hedge and the highest wall,
Through herds of bullocks he baffled the lore
Of harbourer, huntsman, hounds and all,
Of harbourer, hounds and all—
The stag of warrant, the wily stag,
For twenty miles, and five and five,

The animals

He ran, and he never was caught alive,
This stag, this runnable stag.

When he turn'd at bay in the leafy gloom,
In the emerald gloom where the brook ran deep
He heard in the distance the rollers boom,
And he saw in a vision of peaceful sleep,
In a wonderful vision of sleep,
A stag of warrant, a stag, a stag,
A runnable stag in a jewell'd bed,
Under the sheltering ocean dead,
A stag, a runnable stag.

So a fateful hope lit up his eye,
And he open'd his nostrils wide again,
And he toss'd his branching antlers high
As he headed the hunt down the Charlock glen
As he raced down the echoing glen—
For five miles more, the stag, the stag,
For twenty miles, and five and five,
Not to be caught now, dead or alive,
The stag, the runnable stag.

Three hundred gentlemen, able to ride,
Three hundred horses as gallant and free,
Beheld him escape on the evening tide,
Far out till he sank in the Severn Sea,
Till he sank in the depths of the sea—
The stag, the buoyant stag, the stag
That slept at last in a jewell'd bed
Under the sheltering ocean spread,
The stag, the runnable stag.

JOHN DAVIDSON

ON A FAVOURITE CAT
DROWNED IN A TUB
OF GOLD FISHES

'Twas on a lofty vase's side,
Where China's gayest art had dyed
The azure flowers that blow;
Demurest of the tabby kind,
The pensive Selima, reclined,
Gazed in the lake below.

Her conscious tail her joy declared:
The fair round face, the snowy beard,
The velvet of her paws,
Her coat that with the tortoise vies,
Her ears of jet, and emerald eyes;
She saw; and purr'd applause.

Still had she gazed; but 'midst the tide
Two angel forms were seen to glide,
The Genii of the stream:
Their scaly armour's Tyrian hue
Through richest purple, to the view
Betray'd a golden gleam.

The hapless Nymph with wonder saw:
A whisker first, and then a claw,
With many an ardent wish,
She stretch'd, in vain, to reach the prize.
What female heart can gold despise?
What Cat's averse to fish?

Presumptuous maid! with looks intent
Again she stretch'd, again she bent,

The animals

Nor knew the gulf between:
(Malignant Fate sat by and smiled).
The slippery verge her feet beguiled,
She tumbled headlong in!

Eight times emerging from the flood
She mew'd to every watery God
Some speedy aid to send.
No Dolphin came, no Nereid stirr'd:
Nor cruel Tom nor Susan heard.
A favourite has no friend!

From hence, ye Beauties, undeceived,
Know one false step is ne'er retrieved,
And be with caution bold.
Not all that tempts your wandering eyes
And heedless hearts, is lawful prize;
Nor all that glisters, gold.

THOMAS GRAY

THE BULL

SEE an old unhappy bull,
Sick in soul and body both,
Slouching in the undergrowth
Of the forest beautiful,
Banished from the herd he led,
Bulls and cows a thousand head.

Cranes and gaudy parrots go
Up and down the burning sky;
Tree-top cats purr drowsily

The animals

In the dim-day green below;
And troops of moukeys, nutting, some,
All disputing, go and come;

And things abominable sit
Picking offal buck or swine,
On the mess and over it
Burnished flies and beetles shine,
And spiders big as biadders lie
Under hemlocks ten foot high;

And a dotted serpent curled
Round and round and round a tree,
Yellowing its greenery,
Keeps a watch on all the world,
All the world and this old bull
In the forest beautiful.

Bravely by his fall he came:
One he led, a bull of blood
Newly come to lustihood,
Fought and put his prince to shame,
Snuffed and pawed the prostrate head
Tameless even while it bled.

There they left him, every one,
Left him there without a lick,
Left him for the birds to pick,
Left him there for carrion,
Vilely from their bosom cast
Wisdom, worth and love at last.

When the lion left his lair
And roared his beauty through the hills,

The animals

And the vultures pecked their quills
And flew into the middle air,
Then this prince no more to reign
Came to life and lived again.

He snuffed the herd in far retreat,
He saw the blood upon the ground,
And snuffed the burning airs around
Still with beevish odours sweet,
While the blood ran down his head
And his mouth ran slaver red.

Pity him, this fallen chief,
All his splendour, all his strength,
All his body's breadth and length
Dwindled down with shame and grief,
Half the bull he was before,
Bones and leather, nothing more.

See him standing dewlap-deep
In the rushes at the lake,
Surly, stupid, half asleep,
Waiting for his heart to break
And the birds to join the flies
Feasting at his bloodshot eyes;

Standing with his head hung down
In a stupor, dreaming things:
Green savannas, jungles brown,
Battlefields and bellowings,
Bulls undone and lions dead
And vultures flapping overhead.

Dreaming things: of days he spent
With his mother gaunt and lean

The animals

In the valley warm and green,
Full of baby wonderment,
Blinking out of silly eyes
At a hundred mysteries;

Dreaming over once again
How he wandered with a throng
Of bulls and cows a thousand strong,
Wandered on from plain to plain,
Up the hill and down the dale,
Always at his mother's tail;

How he lagged behind the herd,
Lagged and tottered, weak of limb,
And she turned and ran to him
Blaring at the loathly bird
Stationed always in the skies,
Waiting for the flesh that dies.

Dreaming maybe of a day
When her drained and drying paps
Turned him to the sweets and saps,
Richer fountains by the way,
And she left the bull she bore
And he looked to her no more;

And his little frame grew stout,
And his little legs grew strong,
And the way was not so long;
And his little horns came out,
And he played at butting trees
And boulder-stones and tortoises,

Joined a game of knobby skulls
With the youngsters of his year,

The animals

All the other little bulls,
Learning both to bruise and bear,
Learning how to stand a shock
Like a little bull of rock.

Dreaming of a day less dim,
Dreaming of a time less far,
When the faint but certain star
Of destiny burned clear for him,
And a fierce and wild unrest
Broke the quiet of his breast,

And the gristles of his youth
Hardened in his comely pow,
And he came to fighting growth,
Beat his bull and won his cow,
And flew his tail and trampled off
Past the tallest, vain enough,

And curved about in splendour full
And curved again and snuffed the airs
As who should say Come out who dares!
And all beheld a bull, a Bull,
And knew that here was surely one
That backed for no bull, fearing none.

And the leader of the herd
Looked and saw, and beat the ground,
And shook the forest with his sound,
Bellowed at the loathly bird
Stationed always in the skies,
Waiting for the flesh that dies.

Dreaming, this old bull forlorn,
Surely dreaming of the hour

The animals

When he came to sultan power,
And they owned him master-horn,
Chiefest bull of all among
Bulls and cows a thousand strong;

And in all the tramping herd
Not a bull that barred his way,
Not a cow that said him nay,
Not a bull or cow that erred
In the furnace of his look
Dared a second, worse rebuke;

Not in all the forest wide,
Jungle, thicket, pasture, fen,
Not another dared him then,
Dared him and again defied;
Not a sovereign buck or boar
Came a second time for more;

Not a serpent that survived
Once the terrors of his hoof
Risked a second time reproof,
Came a second time and lived,
Not a serpent in its skin
Came again for discipline;

Not a leopard bright as flame,
Flashing fingerhooks of steel
That a wooden tree might feel,
Met his fury once and came
For a second reprimand,
Not a leopard in the land;

The animals

Not a lion of them all,
Not a lion of the hills,
Hero of a thousand kills,
Dared a second fight and fall,
Dared that ram terrific twice,
Paid a second time the price.

Pity him, this dupe of dream,
Leader of the herd again
Only in his daft old brain,
Once again the bull supreme
And bull enough to bear the part
Only in his tameless heart.

Pity him that he must wake;
Even now the swarm of flies
Blackening his bloodshot eyes
Bursts and blusters round the lake,
Scattered from the feast half-fed,
By great shadows overhead;

And the dreamer turns away
From his visionary herds
And his splendid yesterday,
Turns to meet the loathly birds
Flocking round him from the skies
Waiting for the flesh that dies.

RALPH HODGSON

TO A LOUSE

On Seeing One on a Lady's Bonnet at Church

Ha! whare ye gaun, ye crawlin' ferlio?
Your impudence protects you sairly:
I canna say but ye strunt rarely
 Owre gauze an' lace;
Though, faith! I fear ye dine but sparely
 On sic a place.

Ye ugly, creepin', blastit wonner,
Detested, shunned by saunt an' sinner,
How dare you set your fit upon her,
 Sae fine a lady?
Gae somewhere else, and seek your dinner
 On some poor body.

Swith, in some beggar's haffet squattle;
There ye may creep and sprawl and sprattle
Wi' ither kindred, jumping cattle,
 In shoals and nations:
Whare horn nor bane ne'er daur unsettle
 Your thick plantations.

Now haud you there, ye're out o' sight,
Below the fatt'rels, snug an' tight;
Na, faith ye yet! ye'll no be right
 Till ye've got on it,
The very tapmost tow'ring height
 O' Miss's bonnet.

My sooth; right bauld ye set your nose out,
As plump and gray as ony grozet;

The animals

O for some rank, mercurial rozet,
Or fell, red smeddum!
I'd gie you sic a hearty dose o't,
Wad dress your droddum!

I wad na been surprised to spy
You on an auld wife's flannen toy;
Or aiblins some bit duddie boy,
On 's wyliecoat;
But Miss's fine Lunardi, fie!
How daur ye do 't?

O Jenny, dinna toss your head,
An' set your beauties a' abroad!
Ye little ken what cursèd speed
The blastie's makin'
Thae winks and finger-ends, I dread,
Are notice takin'!

O wad some power the giftie gie us
To see oursel's as ithers see us!
It wad frae monie a blunder free us,
And foolish notion:
What airs in dress an' gait wad lea'e us,
And ev'n devotion!

ROBERT BURNS

PORTRAIT OF A LADY

*Thou hast committed—
Fornication: but that was in another country,
And besides, the wench is dead.*

THE JEW OF MALTA

I

AMONG the smoke and fog of a December afternoon
You have the scene arrange itself—as it will seem to do—
With “I have saved this afternoon for you”;
And four wax candles in the darkened room,
Four rings of light upon the ceiling overhead,
An atmosphere of Juliet’s tomb
Prepared for all the things to be said, or left unsaid.
We have been, let us say, to hear the latest Pole
Transmit the Preludes, through his hair and fingertips.
“So intimate, this Chopin, that I think his soul
Should be resurrected only among friends
Some two or three, who will not touch the bloom
That is rubbed and questioned in the concert room.”
—And so the conversation slips
Among velleities and carefully caught regrets
Through attenuated tones of violins
Mingled with remote cornets
And begins.

“You do not know how much they mean to me, my
friends,
And how, how rare and strange it is, to find
In a life composed so much, so much of odds and ends,
[For indeed I do not love it . . . you knew? you are
not blind!

How keen you are!]
To find a friend who has these qualities,
Who has, and gives
Those qualities upon which friendship lives.
How much it means that I say this to you—
Without these friendships—life, what *cauchemari*!”

Among the windings of the violins
And the ariettes
Of cracked cornets
Inside my brain a dull tom-tom begins
Absurdly hammering a prelude of its own,
Capricious monotone
That is at least one definite “false note.”
—Let us take the air, in a tobacco trance,
Admire the monuments,
Discuss the late events,
Correct our watches by the public clocks.
Then sit for half an hour and drink our bocks.

II

Now that lilacs are in bloom
She has a bowl of lilacs in her room
And twists one in her fingers while she talks.
“Ah, my friend, you do not know, you do not know
What life is, you who hold it in your hands”;
(Slowly twisting the lilac stalks)
“You let it flow from you, you let it flow,
And youth is cruel, and has no remorse
And smiles at situations which it cannot see.”
I smile, of course,
And go on drinking tea.
“Yet with these April sunsets, that somehow recall
My buried life, and Paris in the Spring,

Crossroads

I feel immeasurably at peace, and find the world
To be wonderful and youthful, after all."

The voice returns like the insistent out-of-tune
Of a broken violin on an August afternoon:
"I am always sure that you understand
My feelings, always sure that you feel,
Sure that across the gulf you reach your hand.

You are invulnerable, you have no Achilles' heel.
You will go on, and when you have prevailed
You can say: at this point many a one has failed.
But what have I, but what have I, my friend,
To give you, what can you receive from me?
Only the friendship and the sympathy
Of one about to reach her journey's end.

I shall sit here, serving tea to friends. . . ."

I take my hat: how can I make a cowardly amends
For what she has said to me?
You will see me any morning in the park
Reading the comics and the sporting page.
Particularly I remark
An English countess goes upon the stage.
A Greek was murdered at a Polish dance,
Another bank defaulter has confessed.
I keep my countenance,
I remain self-possessed
Except when a street piano, mechanical and tired
Reiterates some worn-out common song
With the smell of hyacinths across the garden
Recalling things that other people have desired.
Are these ideas right or wrong?

III

The October night comes down; returning as before
Except for a slight sensation of being ill at ease
I mount the stairs and turn the handle of the door
And feel as if I had mounted on my hands and knees.
"And so you are going abroad; and when do you return?
But that's a useless question.
You hardly know when you are coming back,
You will find so much to learn."
My smile falls heavily among the bric-à-brac.

"Perhaps you can write to me."
My self-possession flares up for a second;
This is as I had reckoned.
"I have been wondering frequently of late
(But our beginnings never know our ends!)
Why we have not developed into friends."
I feel like one who smiles, and turning shall remark
Suddenly, his expression in a glass.
My self-possession gutters; we are really in the dark.

"For everybody said so, all our friends,
They all were sure our feelings would relate
So closely! I myself can hardly understand.
We must leave it now to fate.
You will write, at any rate.
Perhaps it is not too late.
I shall sit here, serving tea to friends."

And I must borrow every changing shape
To find expression . . . dance, dance
Like a dancing bear,
Cry like a parrot, chatter like an ape.
Let us take the air, in a tobacco trance—

Crossroads

Well! and what if she should die some afternoon,
Afternoon grey and smoky, evening yellow and rose;
Should die and leave me sitting pen in hand
With the smoke coming down above the housetops;
Doubtful, for a while
Not knowing what to feel or if I understand
Or whether wise or foolish, tardy or too soon . . .
Would she not have the advantage, after all?
This music is successful with a "dying fall"
Now that we talk of dying—
And should I have the right to smile?

T. S. ELIOT

THE ROAD NOT TAKEN

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

Crossroads

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

ROBERT FROST

THE ANALYSIS OF LOVE

Else a great Prince in prison lies.

JOHN DONNE

1

I would have my own vision
The world's vision:
The beauty settled in my mind
A lamp in a busy street.

Yet these activities are too intimate,
Made for a solitary sense:
However builded the emotion,
The imagination's mute.

Could voice join mind's eye and scream
Its vision out
Then the world would halt its toil,
Passionless, time unreal.

2

Night palliates
The ragged ridge of things;
The stars, however minute, are intense
And pierce beyond the reckoning brain.

Crossroads

The stars and the dark palliation
Are not indwelling
When driven lust has dark dominion
In the mind's eclipse.

Yet sleep is relentless, extinguishing all
Under its cone of annihilation;
And in the fresh and cool morning
The lusting man is lost.

3

And lust is a finite thing,
Defily to be sized by the passionless mind.
Lust gone, other elements exist
Wrought in the body's being.

The measuring mind can appraise
An earthen grace;
The idiot's chatter
Analyses into experience.

But your appeal is imperceptible
As ultimate atoms
And the fast matrix
Of all within the human universe.

4

There are moments when I see your mind
Lapsed in your sex;
When one particular deployment
Is the reflex of incomplete attainment.

These moments vanish
Like lamps at daybreak:
The wide and even light
Is kind and real.

And then you are universal;
I too: our minds,
Not cramped by figured thought
Unite in the impersonal beauty we possess.

5

Since you are finite you will never find
The hidden source of the mind's emotion;
It is a pool, secret in dusk and dawn,
Deep in the chartless forest life has grown.
Since you are blind you do not see
The thirsting beasts peer from gnarled roots,
And creep to the brink, at noon,
To lap with rough tongues, rippling the burnished
serenity.
—This mind which is collected
From many tricklings, of dew and rain,
Of which you are the chief
And freshest in its depths.

6

You will not drive me to the anguish of love
By any torture of this faith,
Converting to the corrupted semblance of despair
The still evidence of my look;
But by the triumph of those traits—
Their multiplication to excess—
Which mark the frailties germinant
In a mind emotion-bound.
Not that I fear your capture
In human littlenesses;
These are drops we can absorb
In the fount and flow of a passionless mood.

7

The teased fibrils of reason
Weave vainly to dam
Some bank against the giant flood
Of this emotion.

Waves' and winds' erosion
Crumbles granitic cliffs,
Æonly obliterating
The earth's known visage.

The multiple striving of the human race
Wins slowly mind's conquest
Of brutal foes; or is the supreme foe
This hope, deluding?

8

When you have totalled this life
And got the vision complete:
When you have seen a central horror
Blacking out the sun's gift—

Take me: englobe my soul
And spin it on an axis;
• Set about me ringed planets
And diverse atmospheres.

And in that world
Lacking the imperfections of this,
Live boldly, plant sapling trees,
Expecting a burden of fruit.

9

You will say that I am in the scheme of things,
A unit in the crumbling-earth;
Trees are barren:
Chance I'm a barren tree.

Link me with circumstances if you must,
But live to triumph all the same:
We'll be insensate when the whirl
Of circumstance is past.

You'll not avoid the avalanche;
But parasitic on my soul
You run, beat, rebound and throb
In world descent.

10

Nature has perpetual tears
In drooping boughs,
And everywhere inanimate death
Is immemorial.

But I have naught that will express
The grief I feel
When *men and moods combine to show*
The end of this—

This mental ecstasy all spent
In disuniting death;
And the years that spread
Oblivion on our zest.

HERBERT READ
573

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HERBERT READ

WINTER LANDSCAPE

The three men coming down the winter hill
In brown, with tall poles and a pack of hounds
At heel, through the arrangement of the trees,
Past the five figures at the burning straw,
Returning cold and silent to their town,

Returning to the drifted snow, the rink
Lively with children, to the older men,
The long companions they can never reach,
The blue light, men with ladders, by the church
The sledge and shadow in the twilit street,

Are not aware that in the sandy time
To come, the evil waste of history
Outstretched, they will be seen upon the brow
Of that same hill: when all their company
Will have been irrecoverably lost,

These men, this particular three in brown
Witnessed by birds will keep the scene and say
By their configuration with the trees,
The small bridge, the red houses and the fire,
What place, what time, what morning occasion

Sent them into the wood, a pack of hounds
At heel and the tall poles upon their shoulders,
Thence to return as now we see them and
Ankle-deep in snow down the winter hill
Descend while three birds watch and the fourth flies.

JOHN BERRYMAN

AGAINST HOPE

HOPE, whose weak being ruined is
 Alike if it succeed and if it miss;
 Whom good or ill does equally confound,
 And both the horns of fate's dilemma wound.
 Vain shadow! which does vanish quite
 Both at full noon and perfect night!
 The stars have not a possibility
 Of blessing thee;
 If things then from their end we happy call,
 'Tis hope is the most hopeless thing of all.

Hope, thou bold taster of delight,
 Who whilst thou shouldst but taste devour'st it quite!
 Thou bringst us an estate, yet leav'st us poor
 By clogging it with legacies before!
 The joys which we entire should wed
 Come deflowered virgins to our bed;
 Good fortunes without gain imported be,
 Such mighty custom's paid to thee.
 For joy, like wine, kept close does better taste;
 If it take air before, its spirits waste.

Hope, fortune's cheating lottery!
 Where for one prize an hundred blanks there be;
 Fond archer, hope, who tak'st thy air so far,
 That still or short or wide thine arrows are!
 Thin empty cloud, which th'eye deceives
 With shapes that our own fancy gives!
 A cloud, which gilt and painted now appears,
 But must drop presently in tears!
 When thy false beams o'er reason's light prevail,
Æ Ignēs fatui for north stars we sail.

Hope

Brother of fear, more gaily clad!
The merrier fool o' th' two, yet quite as mad:
Sire of repentance, child of fond desire!
That blow'st the alchemist's and lover's fire!
Leading them still insensibly on
By the strange witchcraft of anon!
By thee the one does changing nature through
Her endless labyrinths pursue,
And th'other chases woman, whilst she goes
More ways and turns than hunted nature knows.

ABRAHAM COWLEY

RICHARD CRASHAW'S ANSWER: FOR HOPE

DEAR hope! Earth's dowry and heaven's debt!
The entity of those that are not yet.
Subtlest, but surest being! Thou by whom
Our nothing has a definition!
Substantial shade! whose sweet allay
Blends both the noons of night and day.
Fates cannot find out a capacity
Of hurting thee.
From Thee their lean dilemma with blunt horn
Shrinks, as the sick moon from the wholesome morn.

Rich hope! Love's legacy under lock
Of faith! still spending and still growing stock!
Our crown-land lies above, yet each meal brings
A seemly portion for the sons of kings.
Nor will the virgin joys we wed
Come less unbroken to our bed

Hope

Because that from the bridal cheek of bliss
Thou steal'st us down a distant kiss.
Hope's chaste stealth harms no more joy's maidenhead
Than spousal rites prejudge the marriage bed.

Fair hope! Our earlier heaven, by thee
Young time is taster to eternity.
Thy generous wine with age grows strong, not scur.
Nor does it kill the fruit to smell the flower
Thy golden, growing head never hangs down,
Till in the lap of love's full noon
It falls, and dies! O no, it melts away
As does the dawn into the day,
As lumps of sugar lose themselves and twine
Their supple essence with the soul of wine.

Fortune? Alas, above the world's low wars,
Hope walks, and kicks the curl'd heads of conspiring
stars.
Her keel cuts not the waves where these winds stir;
Fortune's whole lottery is one blank to her.
Her shafts and she fly far above
And forage in the fields of light and love.
Sweet hope! Kind cheat! Fair fallacy! By thee
We are not Where nor What we be,
But What and Where we would be. Thus art thou
Our absent Presence and our future Now.

Faith's sister! Nurse of fair desire!
Fear's antidote! A wise and well-stay'd fire!
Temper 'twixt chill despair and torrid joy!
Queen Regent in young Love's minority!
Though the vext chymick vainly chases
His fugitive gold through all her faces,

Hope

Though Love's more fierce, more fugitive fires assay
One face more fugitive than all they,
True hope's a glorious hunter, and her chase
The God of Nature in the fields of grace.

RICHARD CRASHAW

INVICTUS

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find me, unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.

WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY

OH YET WE TRUST
THAT SOMEHOW GOOD

OH yet we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood;

That nothing walks with aimless feet;
That not one life shall be destroyed,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete;

That not a worm is cloven in vain;
That not a moth with vain desire
Is shrivelled in a fruitless fire,
Or but subserves another's gain.

Behold, we know not anything;
I can but trust that good shall fall
At last—far off—at last, to all,
And every winter change to spring.

So runs my dream: but what am I?
An infant crying in the night:
An infant crying for the light:
And with no language but a cry.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

Hope

SAY NOT THE STRUGGLE
NAUGHT AVAILETH

SAY not the struggle naught availeth,
The labour and the wounds are vain,
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
And as things have been they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars;
It may be, in yon smoke conceal'd,
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light;
In front the sun climbs slow, how slowly!
But westward, look, the land is bright!

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH

TIMES GO BY TURNS

THE loppèd tree in time may grow again,
Most naked plants renew both fruit and flower;
The sorriest wight may find release of pain,
The driest soil suck in some moistening shower;

Times go by turns, and chances change by course,
From foul to fair, from better hap to worse.

The sea of Fortune doth not ever flow,
She draws her favours to the lowest ebb;
Her tides have equal times to come and go,
Her loom doth weave the fine and coarsest web;
No joy so great but runneth to an end,
No hap so hard but may in fine amend.

Not always fall of leaf, nor ever spring,
No endless night, yet not eternal day;
The saddest birds a season find to sing,
The roughest storm a calm may soon allay:
Thus, with succeeding turns, God tempereth all,
That man may hope to rise, yet fear to fall.

A chance may win that by mischance was lost;
That net that holds no great, takes little fish;
In some things all, in all things none are crossed;
Few all they need, but none have all they wish.
Unmingled joys here to no man befall;
Who least, hath some; who most, hath never all.

ROBERT SOUTHWELL

AS WE RUSH

As we rush, as we rush in the Train,
The trees and the houses go wheeling back,
But the starry heavens above the plain
Come flying on our track.

The character

All the beautiful stars of the sky,
The silver doves of the forest of Night,
Over the dull earth swarm and fly,
Companions of our flight.

We will rush ever on without fear;
Let the goal be far, the flight be fleet!
For we carry the Heavens with us, Dear,
While the Earth slips from our feet!

JAMES THOMSON

THE CHARACTER
OF A HAPPY LIFE

How happy is he born and taught
That serveth not another's will;
Whose armour is his honest thought,
And simple truth his utmost skill!

Whose passions not his masters are;
Whose soul is still prepared for death,
Untied unto the world by care
Of public fame or private breath;

Who envies none that chance doth raise,
Nor vice; who never understood
How deepest wounds are given by praise;
Nor rules of state, but rules of good;

of a happy life

Who hath his life from rumours freed;
Whose conscience is his strong retreat;
Whose state can neither flatterers feed,
Nor ruin make oppressors great;

Who God doth late and early pray
More of His grace than gifts to lend;
And entertains the harmless day
With a religious book or friend;

—This man is freed from servile hands
Of hope to rise or fear to fall;
Lord of himself, though not of lands,
And having nothing, yet hath all.

SIR HENRY WOTTON

BALADE DE BON CONSEIL

FLEE fro the prees, and dwelle with sothfastnesse,
Suffyce unto thy good, though it be smal;
For hord hath hate, and climbing tikelnesse,
Prees hath envye, and wele blent overal;
Savour no more than thee bihove shal;
Reule wel thyself, that other folk canst rede;
And trouth thee shal delivere, it is no drede.

Tempest thee noght al croked to redresse,
In trust of hir that turneth as a bal:
Gret reste stant in litel besenesse;

The character

Be war also to sporne ayeyns an al;
Stryve not, as doth the crokke with the wal.
Daunte thyself, that dauntest otheres dede;
And trouthe thee shal delivere, it is no drede.

That thee is sent, receyve in buxumnesse,
The wrastling for this world axeth a fal.
Her is non hoom, her nis but wilderness:
Forth, pilgrim, forth! Forth, boste, out of thy stall
Know thy contree, look up, thank God of al;
Hold the heye way, and lat thy gost thee lede;
And trouthe thee shal delivere, it is no drede.

ENVOY

Therefore, thou Vache, leve thyn old wrecchcdnesse
Unto the world; leve now to be thral;
Crye him mercy, that of his hy goodnesse
Made thee of noght, and in especial
Draw unto him, and pray in general
For thee, and eek for other, hevenlich mede;
And trouthe thee shal delivere, it is no drede.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

*Fro] from. Pies] crowd. Sothfastnesse] truth. Hord] avarice. Tikel-
nesse] instability. Wele blent] success blinds. Biho] behove. Rede]
advise. Drede] doubt. Tempest] distress. Noght] not. Al croked] all
crooked things. Hir] here. Reste] repose. Be war] beware.
Sporne] kick. Ayeyns] against. Al] all. Crokke] crack. Daunte]
control. Buxumncsse] submission. Axeth] asketh. Her is non hoom]
here is no home. Gost] spirit. Lede] lead. Vache] cow. Hevenlich
mede] heavenly reward.*

MY MIND TO ME
A KINGDOM IS

My mind to me a kingdom is;
Such present joys therein I find,
That it excels all other bliss
That earth affords or grows by kind:
Though much I want which most would have
Yet still my mind forbids to crave.

No princely pomp, no wealthy store,
No force to win the victory,
No wily wit to salve a sore,
No shape to feed a loving eye;
To none of these I yield as thrall:
For why? My mind doth serve for all.

I see how plenty suffers oft,
And hasty climbers down do fall;
I see that those which are aloft,
Mishap doth threaten most of all;
They get with toil, they keep with fear:
Such cares my mind could never bear.

Content I live, this is my stay,
I seek no more than may suffice;
I press to bear no haughty sway;
Look what I lack my mind supplies:
Lo, thus I triumph like a king,
Content with that my mind doth bring.

Some have too much, yet still do crave;
I little have, and seek no more.
They are but poor though much they have,

The character

And I am rich with little store;
They poor, I rich; they beg, I give;
They lack, I leave; they pine, I live.

I laugh not at another's loss,
I grudge not at another's gain;
No worldly waves my mind can toss:
My state at one doth still remain:
I fear no foe, I fawn no friend;
I loathe not life nor dread my end.

Some weigh their pleasure by their lust,
Their wisdom by their rage of will;
Their treasure is their only trust,
A cloakéd craft their store of skill.
But all the pleasure that I find
Is to maintain a quiet mind.

My wealth is health and perfect ease;
My conscience clear my choice defence;
I neither seek by bribes to please
Nor by deceit to breed offence;
Thus do I live, thus will I die;
Would all did so as well as I.

SIR EDWARD DYER

CHARACTER OF
THE HAPPY WARRIOR

WHO is the happy Warrior? Who is he
That every man in arms should wish to be?
—It is the generous Spirit, who, when brought
Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought

Upon the plan that pleased his boyish thought:
Whose high endeavours are an inward light
That makes the path before him always bright:
Who, with a natural instinct to discern
What knowledge can perform, is diligent to learn
Abides by this resolve, and stops not there,
But makes his moral being his prime care;
Who, doomed to go in company with Pain,
And Fear, and Bloodshed, miserable train!
Turns his necessity to glorious gain;
In face of these doth exercise a power
Which is our human nature's highest dower;
Controls them and subdues, transmutes, bereaves
Of their bad influence, and their good receives:
By objects, which might force the soul to abate
Her feeling, rendered more compassionate;
Is placable—because occasions rise
So often that demand such sacrifice;
More skilful in self-knowledge, even more pure,
As tempted more; more able to endure,
As more exposed to suffering and distress;
Thence, also, more alive to tenderness.
—'Tis he whose law is reason; who depends
Upon that law as on the best of friends;
Whence, in a stage where men are tempted still
To evil for a guard against worse ill,
And what in quality or act is best
Doth seldom on a right foundation rest,
He labours good on good to fix, and owes
To virtue every triumph that he knows:
—Who, if he rises to station of command,
Rises by open means; and there will stand
On honourable terms, or else retire,
And in himself possess his own desire;
Who comprehends his trust, and to the same

The character

Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim;
And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in wait
For wealth, or honours, or for worldly state;
Whom they must follow, on whose head must fall,
Like showers of manna, if they come at all:
Whose power shed round him in the common strife,
Or mild concerns of ordinary life,
A constant influence, a peculiar grace;
But who, if he be called upon to face
Some awful moment to which Heaven has joined
Great issues, good or bad for human kind,
Is happy as a Lover; and attired
With sudden brightness, like a Man inspired;
And through the heat of conflict, keeps the law
In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw;
Or if an unexpected call succeed,
Come when it will, is equal to the need:
—He who, though thus endued as with a sense
And faculty for storm and turbulence,
Is yet a Soul whose master-bias leans
To homefelt pleasures and to gentle scenes;
Sweet images! which, wheresoe'er he be,
Are at his heart; and such fidelity
It is his darling passion to approve;
More brave for this, that he hath much to love:—
'Tis finally, the Man, who, lifted high,
Conspicuous object in a Nation's eye,
Or left unthought-of in obscurity,—
Who, with a toward or untoward lot,
Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or not—
Plays in the many games of life, that one
Where what he most doth value must be won:
Whom neither shape of danger can dismay,
Nor thought of tender happiness betray;
Who, not content that former worth stand fast,

of a happy life

Looks forward, persevering to the last,
From well to better, daily self-surpass:
Who, whether praise of him must walk the earth
For ever, and to noble deeds give birth,
Or he must fall, to sleep without his fame,
And leave a dead unprofitable name—
Finds comfort in himself and in his cause;
And, while the mortal mist is gathering, draws
His breath in confidence of Heaven's applause:
This is the happy Warrior; this is He
That every Man in arms should wish to be.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

THE QUALITY OF MERCY

THE quality of mercy is not strained,
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath; it is twice blessed;
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes:
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes
The thronèd monarch better than his crown;
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
But mercy is above this sceptred sway,
It is 'enthronèd in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself,
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
(from *The Merchant of Venice*)

THE WISH

WELL then! I now do plainly see
This busy world and I shall ne'er agree.
The very honey of all earthly joy
Does of all meats the soonest cloy;
 And they, methinks, deserve my pity
Who for it can endure the stings,
The crowd, and buzz, and murmurings,
 Of this great hive, the city.

Ah, yet, ere I descend to the grave,
May I a small house and large garden have;
And a few friends, and many books, both true,
Both wise, and both delightful too!
 And since love ne'er will from me flee,
A Mistress moderately fair,
And good as guardian angels are,
 Only beloved and loving me.

O fountains! when in you shall I
Myself eased of unpeaceful thoughts espy?
O fields! O woods! when, when shall I be made
The happy tenant of your shade?
 Here's the spring-head of Pleasure's flood:
Here's wealthy Nature's treasury,
Where all the riches lie that she
 Has coin'd and stamp'd for good.

Pride and ambition here
Only in far-fetch'd metaphors appear;
Here nought but winds can hurtful murmurs scatter,

of a happy life

And nought but Echo flatter.

The gods, when they descended, hither
From heaven did always choose their way:
And therefore we may boldly say
That 'tis the way too thither.

How happy here should I
And one dear She live, and embracing die!
She who is all the world, and can exclude
In deserts solitude.

I should have then this only fear:
Lest men, when they my pleasures see,
Should hither throng to live like me,
And so make a city here.

ABRAHAM COWLEY

TO GILD REFINÉD GOLD

To gild refinéd gold, to paint the lily,
To throw perfume on the violet,
To smooth the ice, or add another hue
Unto the rainbow, or with taper-light
To seek the beauteous eye of heaven to garnish,
Is wasteful and ridiculous excess.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
(from *King John*)

THE WILL

BEFORE I sigh my last gasp, let me breathe,
Great Love, some legacies: here I bequeathe
Mine eyes to Argus, if mine eyes can see;
If they be blind, then, Love, I give them thee;
My tongue to Fame; to ambassadors mine ears;
 To women or the sea, my tears;
 Thou, Love, hast taught me heretofore
By making me serve her who had twenty more
That I should give to none, but such as had too much
 before.

My constancy I to the planets give;
My truth to them who at the court do live;
Mine ingenuity and openness,
To Jesuits; to buffoons my pensiveness;
My silence to any, who abroad have been;
 My money to a Capuchin:
 Thou, Love, taught'st me, by appointing me
To love there, where no love received can be,
Only to give to such as have an incapacity.

My faith I give to Roman Catholics;
All my good works unto the schismatics
Of Amsterdam; my best civility
And courtship to an University;
My modesty I give to shoulders bare;
 My patience let gamesters share:
 Thou, Love, taught'st me, by making me
Love her that holds my love disparity,
Only to give to such as have an incapacity.

I give my reputation to those
Which were my friends; mine industry to foes;
To schoolmen I bequeathe my doubtfulness;
My sickness to physicians, or excess;
To Nature all that I in rhyme have writ;
 And to my company my wit:
 Thou, Love, by making me adore
 Her, who begot this love in me before,
Taught'st me to make, as though I gave, when I do but
 restore.

To him, for whom the passing-bell next tolls,
I give my physic-books; my written rolls
Of moral counsels I to Bedlam give;
My brazen medals unto them which live
In want of bread; to them which pass among
 All foreigners, mine English tongue:
 Thou, Love, by making me love one
 Who thinks her friendship a fit portion
For younger lovers, dost my gifts thus disproportion.

Therefore I'll give no more, but I'll undo
The world by dying; because Love dies too.
Then all your beauties will be no more worth
Than gold in mines, where none doth draw it forth;
And all your graces no more use shall have,
 Than a sun-dial in a grave:
 Thou, Love, taught'st me, by making me
 Love her, who doth neglect both me and thee,
To invent and practise this one way to annihilate all three.

JOHN DONNE

F A B L E

THE mountain and the squirrel
Had a quarrel;
And the former called the latter "Little Prig."
Bun replied,
"You are doubtless very big;
But all sorts of things and weather
Must be taken in together
To make up a year
And a sphere.
And I think it's no disgrace
To occupy my place.
If I'm not so large as you,
You are not so small as I,
And not half so spry.
I'll not deny you make
A very pretty squirrel track;
Talents differ: all is well and wisely put;
If I cannot carry forests on my back,
Neither can you crack a nut."

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

THE BANISHED DUKE
SPEAKS TO HIS RETAINERS

Now, my co-mates, and brothers in exile,
Hath not old custom made this life more sweet
Than that of painted pomp? Are not these woods
More free from peril than the envious court?
Here feel we but the penalty of Adam,
The seasons' difference;—as the icy fang
And churlish chiding of the winter's wind,

Which, when it bites and blows upon my body,
Even till I shrink with cold, I smile, and say
‘This is no flattery;—these are counsellors
That feelingly persuade me what I am.’—
Sweet are the uses of adversity;
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head:
And this our life exempt from public haunt
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones and good in everything.
I would not change it.

AMIENS. Happy is your Grace,
That can translate the stubbornness of fortune
Into so quiet and so sweet a style. . . .

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
(from *As You Like It*)

A POISON TREE

I WAS angry with my friend,
I told my wrath, my wrath did end;
I was angry with my foe,
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I water’d it in fears,
Night and morning with my tears;
And I sunned it with smiles,
And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night,
Till it bore an apple bright;
And my foe beheld it shine,
And he knew that it was mine,

The character

And into my garden stole
When the night had veil'd the pole:
In the morning glad I see
My foe outstretch'd beneath the tree.

WILLIAM BLAKE

THE MAN OF PRAYER

Strong is the horse upon his speed;
Strong in pursuit the rapid glede,
Which makes at once his game:
Strong the tall ostrich on the ground;
Strong through the turbulent profound
Shoots xiphias to his aim.

Strong is the lion—like a coal
His eyeball—like a bastion's mole
His chest against the foes:
Strong, the gier-eagle on his sail,
Strong against tide, th' enormous whale
Emerges as he goes.

But stronger still, in earth and air,
And in the sea, the man of prayer,
And far beneath the tide;
And in the seat to faith assigned,
Where ask is have, where seek is find
Where knock is open wide.

CHRISTOPHER SMART
(from *The Song to David*)

of a happy life

THE LAKE ISLE OF INNISFREE

I WILL arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honey
bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes
dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the
cricket sings;
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements gray,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

W. B. YEATS

TO A WATERFOWL

WHITHER, 'midst falling dew,
While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,
Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue
Thy solitary way!

Vainly the fowler's eye
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,

The character

As, darkly painted on the crimson sky,
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink
Of weedy lake, or marge of river wide,
Or where the rocking billows rise and sink
On the chafed ocean side?

There is a power whose care
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast,—
The desert and illimitable air,—
Lone wandering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fanned,
At that far height, the cold, thin atmosphere,
Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,
Though the dark night is near.

And soon that toil shall end;
Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest,
And scream among thy fellows; reeds shall bend,
Soon, o'er thy sheltered nest.

Thou'rt gone, the abyss of heaven
Hath swallowed up thy form; yet, on my heart
Deeply hath sunk the lesson thou hast given,
And shall not soon depart.

He who, from zone to zone,
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,
In the long way that I must tread alone,
Will lead my steps aright.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

WHEN I CONSIDER
HOW MY LIGHT IS SPENT

WHEN I consider how my light is spent,
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide,
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest He returning chide:
Doth God exact day-labour, light denied,
I fondly ask; but patience to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, God doth not need
Either man's works or His own gifts; who best
Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best; His state
Is kingly; thousands at His bidding speed
And post o'er land and ocean without rest:
They also serve who only stand and wait.

JOHN MILTON

TO THINE OWN SELF BE TRUE

THERE, my blessing with thee!
And these few precepts in thy memory
Look thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any unproportioned thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar;
The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel;
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
Of each new-hatched, unfledged comrade. Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel, but, being in,

The character

Bear 't that the opposèd may beware of thee.
Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice;
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgement.
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not expressed in fancy; rich, not gaudy;
For the apparel oft proclaims the man,
And they in France of the best rank and station
Are most select and generous, chief in that.
Neither a borrower, nor a lender be;
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
This above all: to thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
(from *Hamlet*)

SONNET

How soon hath Time the subtle thief of youth,
Stol'n on his wing my three and twentieth year!
My hasting days fly on with full career,
But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th.
Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth,
That I to manhood am arriv'd so near,
And inward ripeness doth much less appear,
That *some more timely-happy spirits endu'th*.
Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow,
It shall be still in strictest measure ev'n,
To that same lot, however mean, or high,
Toward which Time leads me, and the will of Heav'n;
All is, if I have grace to use it so,
As ever in my great Task-Master's eye.

JOHN MILTON

THE ANNIVERSARY

ALL kings, and all their favorites,
All glory of honors, beauties, wits,
The sun itself, which makes time, as they pass,
Is elder by a year now than it was
When thou and I first one another saw.
All other things to their destruction draw,
Only our love hath no decay;
This no tomorrow hath, nor yesterday;
Running it never runs from us away,
But truly keeps his first, last, everlasting day.

Two graves must hide thine and my corse;
If one might, death were no divorce.
Alas! as well as other princes, we
—Who prince enough in one another be—
Must leave at last in death these eyes and ears,
Oft fed with true oaths, and with sweet salt tears;
But souls where nothing dwells but love
—All other thoughts being inmates—then shall prove
This or a love increased there above,
When bodies to their graves, souls from their graves re-
move.

And then we shall be thoroughly blest;
But we no more than all the rest.
Here upon earth we're kings, and none but we
Can be such kings, nor of such subjects be.
Who is so safe as we? where none can do
Treason to us, except one of us two.

True and false fears let us refrain,
Let us love nobly, and live, and add again
Years and years unto years, till we attain
To write threescore; this is the second of our reign.

JOHN DONNE

LIFE AND FAME

ON Life, thou Nothing's younger brother!
So like, that one might take one for the other.
What's somebody, or nobody?
In all the cobwebs of the schoolmen's trade,
We no such nice distinction woven see,
As 'tis to be, or not to be.
Dream of a shadow! A reflection made
From the false glories of the gay reflected bow,
Is a more solid thing than thou.
Vain weak-built isthmus, which dost proudly rise
Up betwixt two eternities;
Yet canst nor wave nor wind sustain,
But broken and o'erwhelm'd, the endless oceans meet
again.

And with what rare inventions do we strive,
Ourselves then to survive?
Wise, subtle arts, and such as well befit
That nothing man's no wit.
Some with vast costly tombs would purchase it,
And by the proofs of Death pretend to live.
Here lies the Great—False marble, where?
Nothing but small, and sordid dust lies there.
Some build enormous mountain-palaces,
The fools and architects to please:
A lasting life in well-hewn stone they rear:
So he who on th' Egyptian shore
Was slain so many hundred years before,
Lives still (Oh life most happy and most dear!
Oh life that epicures envy to hear!)
Lives in the dropping ruins of his amphitheatre.

of a happy life

His father-in-law an higher place does claim
In the seraphic entity of fame.
He since that toy his death,
Does fill all mouths, and breathes in all men's breath.
'Tis true, the two immortal syllables remain,
But, oh ye learned men explain,
What essence, what existence this,
What substance, what subsistence, what hypostasis
In six poor letters is?
In those alone does the great Cæsar live,
'Tis all the conquer'd world could give.
We poets madder yet than all,
With a refin'd fantastic vanity,
Think we not only have, but give eternity.
Fain would I see that prodigal,
Who his to-morrow would bestow,
For all old Homer's life e'er since he died till now.

ABRAHAM COWLEY

IT IS NOT GROWING LIKE A TREE

It is not growing like a tree
In bulk, doth make Man better be;
Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,
To fall a log at last, dry, bald, and sere:
A lily of a day
Is fairer far in May,
Although it fall and die that night—
It was the plant and flower of Light.
In small proportions we just beauties see;
And in short measures life may perfect be.

BEN JONSON

KNOW THEN THYSELF

KNOW then thyself, presume not God to scan,
The proper study of Mankind is Man.
Plac'd on this isthmus of a middle state,
A Being darkly wise, and rudely great:
With too much knowledge for the Sceptic side,
With too much weakness for the Stoic's pride,
He hangs between; in doubt to act, or rest;
In doubt to deem himself a God, or Beast;
In doubt his Mind or Body to prefer;
Born but to die, and reas'ning but to err;
Alike in ignorance, his reason such,
Whether he thinks too little, or too much:
Chaos of Thought and Passion, all confus'd;
Still by himself abus'd, or disabus'd;
Created half to rise, and half to fall;
Great lord of all things, yet a prey to all;
Sole judge of truth, in endless error hurld:
The glory, jest, and riddle of the world!

Self-love, the spring of motion, acts the soul;
Reason's comparing balance rules the whole.
Man, but for that, no action could attend,
And, but for this, were active to no end:
Fix'd like a plant on his peculiar spot,
To draw nutrition, propagate, and rot;
Or, meteor-like, flame lawless through the void,
Destroying others, by himself destroy'd.

Most strength the moving principle requires;
Active its task, it prompts, impels, inspires.
Sedate and quiet the comparing lies,
Form'd but to check, delib'rate, and advise.
Self-love still stronger, as its objects nigh;

Reason's at distance, and in prospect lie;
That sees immediate good by present sense;
Reason, the future and the consequence.
Thicker than arguments, temptations throng,
At best more watchful this, but that more strong.
The action of the stronger to suspend
Reason still use, to reason still attend.
Attention, habit and experience gains;
Each strengthens reason, and self-love restrains.

Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.
But where th' extreme of vice, was ne'er agreed:
Ask where's the north? at York, 'tis on the Tweed;
In Scotland, at the Orcades; and there,
At Greenland, Zembla, or the Lord knows where.
No creature owns it in the first degree,
But thinks his neighbour farther gone than he;
Ev'n those who dwell beneath its very zone,
Or never feel the rage, or never own;
What happier natures shrink at with affright,
The hard inhabitant contends is right.

Honour and shame from no condition rise;
Act well your part, there all the honour lies.
Fortune in men has some small difference made,
One flaunts in rags, one flutters in brocade;
The cobbler apron'd, and the parson gown'd,
The friar hooded, and the monarch crown'd.
"What differ more," you cry, "than crown and cowl?"
I'll tell you, friend! a wise man and a fool.
You'll find, if once the monarch acts the monk,
Or, cobbler-like, the parson will be drunk,

The character

Worth makes the man, and want of it, the fellow;
The rest is all but leather or prunella.

Stuck o'er with titles and hung round with strings,
That thou mayst be by kings, or whores of kings,
Boast the pure blood of an illustrious race,
In quiet flow from Lucrece to Lucrece:
But by your father's worth if yours you rate,
Count me those only who were good and great.
Go! if your ancient, but ignoble blood
Has crept through scoundrels ever since the flood,
Go! and pretend your family is young;
Nor own, your fathers have been fools so long.
What can ennoble sots, or slaves, or cowards?
Alas! not all the blood of all the Howards.

What's fame? a fancied life in others' breath,
A thing beyond us, ev'n before our death.
Just what you hear, you have, and what's unknown.
The same (my Lord) if Tully's, or your own.
All that we feel of it begins and ends
In the small circle of our foes or friends;
To all beside as much an empty shade
An Eugene living, as a Cæsar dead;
Alike or when, or where, they shone, or shine,
Or on the Rubicon, or on the Rhine.
A wit's a feather, and a chief a rod;
An honest man's the noblest work of God.

ALEXANDER POPE
(from *Essay on Man*)

I ON A DISTANT PROSPECT
OF ETON COLLEGE

Ye distant spires, ye antique towers
That crown the watery glade,
Where grateful Science still adores
Her Henry's holy shade;
And ye, that from the stately brow
Of Windsor's heights th' expanse below
Of grove, of lawn, of mead survey,
Whose turf, whose shade, whose flowers among
Wanders the hoary Thames along
His silver-winding way:

Ah happy hills! ah pleasing shade!
Ah fields beloved in vain!
Where once my careless childhood stray'd,
A stranger yet to pain!
I feel the gales that from ye blow
A momentary bliss bestow,
As waving fresh their gladsome wing
My weary soul they seem to soothe,
And, redolent of joy and youth,
To breathe a second spring.

Say, Father Thames, for thou hast seen
Full many a sprightly race
Disporting on thy margent green
The paths of pleasure trace;
Who foremost now delight to cleave
With pliant arm, thy glassy wave?
The captive linnet which enthrall?
What idle progeny succeed

The character

To chase the rolling circle's speed,
Or urge the flying ball?

While some on earnest business hent
Their murmuring labours ply
'Gainst graver hours that bring constraint
To sweeten liberty:
Some bold adventurers disdain
The limits of their little reign
And unknown regions dare descry:
Still as they run they look behind,
They hear a voice in every wind,
And snatch a fearful joy.

Gay hope is theirs by fancy fed,
Less pleasing when possest;
The tear forgot as soon as shed,
The sunshine of the breast:
Theirs buxom health, of rosy hue,
Wild wit, invention ever new,
And lively cheer, of vigour born;
The thoughtless day, the easy night,
The spirits pure, the slumbers light
That fly th' approach of morn.

Alas! regardless of their doom
The little victims play;
No sense have they of ills to come,
Nor care beyond to-day:
Yet see how all around 'em wait
The ministers of human fate
And black Misfortune's baleful train!
Ah show them where in ambush stand
To seize their prey, the murderous band!
Ah, tell them they are men!

These shall the fury Passions tear
The vultures of the mind,
Disdainful Anger, pallid Fear,
And Shame that skulks behind;
Or pining Love shall waste their youth,
Or Jealousy with rankling tooth,
That inly gnaws the secret heart,
And Envy wan, and faded Care,
Grim-visaged comfortless Despair,
And Sorrow's piercing dart.

Ambition this shall tempt to rise,
Then whirl the wretch from high,
To bitter Scorn a sacrifice
And grinning Infamy.
The stings of Falsehood those shall try
And hard Unkindness' alter'd eye,
That mocks the tear it forced to flow;
And keen Remorse with blood defiled,
And moody Madness laughing wild
Amid severest woe.

Lo, in the vale of years beneath
A griesly troop are seen,
The painful family of Death,
More hideous than their queen:
This racks the joints, this fires the veins,
That every labouring sinew strains,
Those in the deeper vitals rage:
Lo! Poverty, to fill the band,
That numbs the soul with icy hand,
And slow-consuming Age.

To each his sufferings: all are men,
Condemn'd alike to groan;

The character

The tender for another's pain,
Th' unfeeling for his own.
Yet, ah! why should they know their fate,
Since sorrow never comes too late,
And happiness too swiftly flies?
Thought would destroy their paradise.
No more;—where ignorance is bliss
'Tis folly to be wise.

THOMAS GRAY

DESIRE

THOU blind man's mark, thou fool's self-chosen snare,
Fond Fancy's scum and dregs of scattered thought,
Band of all evils, cradle of causeless care,
Thou web of will whose end is never wrought;
Desire! desire, I have too dearly bought
With price of mangled mind thy worthless ware;
Too long, too long asleep thou hast me brought,
Who should my mind to higher things prepare.
But yet in vain thou hast my ruin sought,
In vain thou mad'st me to vain things aspire,
In vain thou kindlest all thy smoky fire.
For virtue hath this better lesson taught,
Within myself to seek my only hire,
Desiring nought but how to kill desire.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

L'ALLEGRO

HENCE loathéd Melancholy
Of Cerberus and blackest midnight born,
In Stygian cave forlorn
'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights unholy,
Find out some uncouth cell,
Where brooding darkness spreads his jealous wings,
And the night-raven sings;
There under ebon shades, and low-browed rocks,
As ragged as thy locks,
In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.
But come thou goddess fair and free,
In Heaven yclept Euphrosyne,
And by men, heart-easing Mirth,
Whom lovely Venus at a birth
With two sister Graces more
To ivy-crownéd Bacchus bore;
Or whether (as some sager sing)
The frolic wind that breathes the spring,
Zephyr with Aurora playing,
As he met her once a-maying,
There on beds of violets blue,
And fresh-blown roses washed in dew,
Filled her with thee a daughter fair,
So buxom, blithe, and debonair.
Haste thee nymph and bring with thee
Jest and youthful jollity,
Quips and cranks, and wanton wiles,
Nods, and becks, and wreathéd smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport that wrinkled care derides,
And laughter holding both his sides.

The character

Come, and trip it as ye go
On the light fantastic toe,
And in thy right hand lead with thee,
The mountain nymph, sweet Liberty;
And if I give thee honour due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew
To live with her, and live with thee,
In unprov'd pleasures free;
To hear the lark begin his flight,
And singing startle the dull night,
From his watch-tower in the skies,
Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
Then to come in spite of sorrow,
And at my window bid good morrow,
Through the sweet-briar, or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine;
While the cock with lively din,
Scatters the rear of darkness thin,
And to the stack, or the barn door,
Stoutly struts his dames before;
Oft listening how the hounds and horn
Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn,
From the side of some hoar hill,
Through the high wood echoing shrill.
Some time walking not unseen
By hedge-row elms, on hillocks green,
Right against the eastern gate,
Where the great sun begins his state,
Robed in flames, and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveries dight.
While the ploughman near at hand,
Whistles o'er the furrowed land,
And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his scythe,
And every shepherd tells his tale

Under the hawthorn in the dale.

Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures
While the landskip round it measures,
Russet lawns, and fallows gray,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray;
Mountains on whose barren breast
The labouring clouds do often rest;
Meadows trim with daisies pied,
Shallow brooks, and rivers wide.
Towers, and battlements it sees
Bosomed high in tufted trees,
Where perhaps some beauty lies,
The cynosure of neighbouring eyes.
Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes,
From betwixt two aged oaks,
Where Corydon and Thyrsis met,
Are at their savoury dinner set
Of herbs, and other country messes,
Which the neat-handed Phyllis dresses;
And then in haste her bower she leaves,
With Thestylis to bind the sheaves;
Or if the earlier season lead
To the tanned haycock in the mead.

Sometimes with secure delight
The upland hamlets will invite,
When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebecks sound
To many a youth, and many a maid
Dancing in the chequered shade;
And young and old come forth to play
On a sunshine holiday,
Till the live-long daylight fail;
Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,

The character

With stories told of many a feat,
How Faery Mab the junkets eat;
She was pinched, and pulled she said,
And he by friar's lanthorn led;
Tells how the drudging goblin sweat,
To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail hath threshed the corn
That ten day-labourers could not end;
Then lies him down the lubber fiend,
And stretched out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength;
And crop-full out of doors he flings,
Ere the first cock his matin rings.
Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
By whispering winds soon lulled asleep.

Towered cities please us then,
And the busy hum of men,
Where throngs of knights and barons bold,
In weeds of peace high triumphs hold,
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize
Of wit, or arms, while both contend
To win her grace, whom all commend.
There let Hymen oft appear
In saffron robe, with taper clear,
And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
With mask, and antique pageantry,
Such sights as youthful poets dream
On summer eves by haunted stream.
Then to the well-trod stage anon,
If Jonson's learned sock be on,
Or sweetest Shakespeare, fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild.

of a happy life

And ever against eating cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
Married to immortal verse,
Such as the meeting soul may pierce
In notes, with many a winding bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out,
With wanton heed, and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running;
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony:
That Orpheus' self may heave his head
From golden slumber on a bed
Of heaped Elysian flowers, and hear
Such strains as would have won the ear
Of Pluto, to have quite set free
His half-regained Eurydice.
These delights if thou canst give,
Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

JOHN MILTON

IL PENSEROSO

HENCE, vain deluding joys,
The brood of folly without father bred,
How little you bested,
Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys;
Dwell in some idle brain,
And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
As thick and numberless
As the gay motes that people the sun-beams,
Or likest hovering dreams
The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train.

The character

But hail thou goddess, sage and holy,
Hail divinest Melancholy,
Whose saintly visage is too bright
To hit the sense of human sight;
And therefore to our weaker view,
O'er-laid with black, staid wisdom's hue:
Black, but such as in esteem
Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,
Or that starred Ethiop queen that strove
To set her beauty's praise above
The sea nymphs, and their power offended.
Yet thou art higher far descended,
Thee bright-haired Vesta long of yore,
To solitary Saturn bore;
His sister she (in Saturn's reign,
Such mixture was not held a stain).
Oft in glimmering bowers and glades
He met her, and in secret shades
Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
While yet there was no fear of Jove.
Come pensive nun, devout and pure,
Sober, stedfast, and demure,
All in a robe of darkest grain,
Flowing with majestic train,
And sable stole of cypress lawn,
Over thy decent shoulders drawn.
Come, but keep thy wonted state,
With even step and musing gait,
And looks commercing with the skies,
Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes:
There held in holy passion still,
Forget thyself to marble, till
With a sad leaden downward cast,
Thou fix them on the earth as fast.
And join with thee calm peace, and quiet,

Spare fast, that oft with gods doth diet,
And hears the Muses in a ring,
Aye round about Jove's altar sing.
And add to these retiréd leisure,
That in trim gardens takes his pleasure;
But first, and chiefest, with thee bring
Him that yon soars on golden wing,
Guiding the fiery-wheeléd throne,
The cherub, contemplation;
And the mute silence hist along,
'Less Philomel will deign a song,
In her sweetest, saddest plight,
Smoothing the rugged brow of night,
While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke,
Gently o'er th' accustomed oak;
Sweet bird that shunn'st the noise of folly,
Most musical, most melancholy!
Thee chauntress oft the woods among,
I woo to hear thy even-song;
And missing thee, I walk unseen
On the dry smooth-shaven green,
To behold the wandering moon,
Riding near her highest noon,
Like one that hath been led astray
Through the heav'ns wide pathless way;
And oft, as if her head she bowed,
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
Oft on a plat of rising ground,
I hear the far-off curfew sound,
Over some wide-watered shore,
Swinging slow with sullen roar;
Or if the air will not permit,
Some still removéd place will fit,
Where glowing embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom,

The character

Far from all resort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,
Or the bellman's drowsy charm,
To bless the doors from nightly harm:
Or let my lamp at midnight hour
Be seen in some high lonely tower,
Where I may oft out-watch the Bear,
With thrice-great Hermes, or unsphere
The spirit of Plato to unfold
What worlds, or what vast regions hold
The immortal mind that hath forsook
Her mansion in this fleshly nook:
And of those daemons that are found
In fire, air, flood, or under ground,
Whose power hath a true consent
With planet or with element.
Sometimes let gorgeous tragedy
In scepter'd pall come sweeping by,
Presenting Thebes', or Pelops' line,
Or the tale of Troy divine,
Or what (though rare) of later age,
Ennobled hath the buskin'd stage.

But, O sad virgin, that thy power
Might raise Musæus from his bower,
Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing
Such notes as warbled to the string
Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
And made hell grant what love did seek.
Or call up him that left half told
The story of Cambuscan bold,
Of Campbell, and of Algarsife,
And who had Canace to wife,
That owned the virtuous ring and glass,
And of the wond'rous horse of brass,

On which the Tartar king did ride;
And if aught else, great bards beside,
In sage and solemn tunes have sung,
Of tourneys and of trophies hung;
Of forests, and enchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear.
Thus night oft see me in thy pale career,
Till civil-suited morn appear,
Not tricked and frownced as she was wont,
With the Attic boy to hunt,
But kerchiefed in a comely cloud,
While rocking winds are piping loud,
Or ushered with a shower still,
When the gust hath blown his fill,
Ending on the rustling leaves,
With minute drops from off the eaves.
And when the sun begins to fling
His flaming beams, me goddess bring
To arched walks of twilight groves,
And shadows brown that Sylvan loves
Of pine, or monumental oak,
Where the rude axe with heavéd stroke,
Was never heard the nymphs to daunt,
Or fright them from their hallowed haunt.
There in close covert by some brook,
Where no profaner eye may look,
Hide me from day's garish eye,
While the bee with honied thigh,
That at her flower work doth sing,
And the waters murmuring
With such consort as they keep,
Entice the dewy-feathered sleep;
And let some strange mysterious dream,
Wave at his wings in airy stream,
Of lively portraiture displayed,

The character of a happy life

Softly on my eye-lids laid.
And as I wake, sweet music breathe
Above, about, or underneath,
Sent by some spirit to mortals good,
Or th' unseen genius of the wood.

But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloisters pale,
And love the high embow'd roof,
With antic pillars massy proof,
And storied windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light.
There let the pealing organ blow,
To the full-voiced choir below,
In service high, and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
Dissolve me into ecstasies,
And bring all heav'n before mine eyes.
And may at last my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown and mossy cell,
Where I may sit and rightly spell
Of every star that heav'n doth show,
And every herb that sips the dew;
Till old experience do attain
To something like prophetic strain.
These pleasures, Melancholy, give,
And I with thee will choose to live.

JOHN MILTON

IN NO STRANGE LAND

'The Kingdom of God is within you'

O WORLD invisible, we view thee,
O world intangible, we touch thee,
O world unknowable, we know thee,
Inapprehensible, we clutch thee!

Does the fish soar to find the ocean,
The eagle plunge to find the air—
That we ask of the stars in motion
If they have rumour of thee there?

Not where the wheeling systems darken,
And our benumb'd conceiving soars!—
The drift of pinions, would we hearken,
Beats at our own clay-shutter'd doors.

The angels keep their ancient places;—
Turn but a stone, and start a wing!
'Tis ye, 'tis your estrang'd faces,
That miss the many-splendour'd thing.

But (when so sad thou canst not sadder)
Cry;—and upon thy so sore loss
Shall shine the traffic of Jacob's ladder
Pitched betwixt Heaven and Charing Cross.

Yea, in the night, my Soul, my daughter,
Cry,—clinging Heaven by the hems;
And lo, Christ walking on the water,
Not of Gennesareth, but Thames!

FRANCIS THOMPSON

LEAVE ME, O LOVE

LEAVE me, O Love, which reachest but to dust;
And thou, my mind, aspire to higher things.
Grow rich in that which never taketh rust;
Whatever fades but fading pleasure brings.
Draw in thy beams, and humble all thy might,
To that sweet yoke where lasting freedom be,
Which breaks the clouds and opens forth the light,
That doth both shine and give us sight to see.
O take fast hold, let that light be thy guide
In this small course which birth draws out to death,
And think how evil becometh him to slide
Who seeketh heav'n, and comes of heav'nly breath.
Then, farewell world! thy uttermost I see;
Eternal Love, maintain thy life in me.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

From THE SONG TO DAVID

HE sang of God, the mighty source
Of all things, the stupendous force
On which all strength depends:
From Whose right arm, beneath Whose eyes,
All period, power, and enterprise
Commences, reigns, and ends.

The world, the clustering spheres He made,
The glorious light, the soothing shade,
Dale, champaign, grove and hill:

The multitudinous abyss,
Where secrecy remains in bliss,
And wisdom hides her skill.

Tell them, I AM, Jehovah said
To Moses: while Earth heard in dread,
And, smitten to the heart,
At once, above, beneath, around,
All Nature, without voice or sound,
Replied, 'O Lord, THOU ART.'

CHRISTOPHER SMART

AFTER GREAT PAIN A FORMAL FEELING COMES

AFTER great pain a formal feeling comes—
The nerves sit ceremonious like tombs;
The stiff Heart questions—was it He that bore?
And yesterday—or centuries before?

The feet mechanical
Go round a wooden way
Of ground or air or aught, regardless grown,
A quartz contentment like a stone.

This is the hour of lead
Remembered if outlived,
As freezing persons recollect the snow—
First chill, then stupor, then the letting go.

EMILY DICKINSON

THE TIGER

TIGER, tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder and what art
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And, when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand and what dread feet?

What the hammer? What the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? What dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,
And water'd heaven with their tears,
Did He smile His work to see?
Did He who made the lamb make thee?

Tiger, tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

WILLIAM BLAKE

A HYMN TO CHRIST,
AT THE AUTHOR'S LAST GOING
INTO GERMANY

In what torn ship so ever I embark,
That ship shall be my emblem of Thy ark;
What sea soever swallow me, that flood
Shall be to me an emblem of Thy blood;
Though Thou with clouds of anger do disguise
Thy face, yet through that mask I know those eyes,
Which, though they turn away sometimes,
They never will despise.

Eugene - 182
I sacrifice this island unto Thee,
And all whom I love there, and who love me;
When I have put our seas 'twixt them and me,
Put thou Thy seas betwixt my sins and Thee.
As the tree's sap doth seek the root below
In winter, in my winter now I go,
Where none but Thee, the eternal root
Of true love, I may know.

Nor Thou nor Thy religion dost control
The amorousness of an harmonious soul;
But Thou wouldst have that love Thyself; as Thou
'Art jealous, Lord, so I am jealous now;
Thou lovest not, till from loving more Thou free
My soul; Who ever gives, takes liberty;
Oh, if Thou carest not whom I love,
Alas! Thou lovest not me.

Seal then this bill of my divorce to all,
On whom those fainter beams of love did fall;
Marry those loves, which in youth scatter'd be

Devotional

On fame, wit, hopes—false mistresses—to Thee,
Churches are best for prayer, that have least light;
To see God only, I go out of sight;
And to escape stormy days, I choose
An everlasting night.

JOHN DONNE

WHO IS AT MY WINDOW?

Who is at my window? Who? Who?
Go from my window! Go! Go!
Who calls there, like a stranger,
Go from my window! Go!

—Lord, I am here, a wretched mortal,
That for thy mercy doth cry and call
Unto thee, my lord celestial,
See who is at thy window, who?—

Remember thy sin, remember thy smart,
And also for thee what was my part,
Remember the spear that pierced my heart,
And in at my door thou shalt go.

I ask no thing of thee therefore,
But love for love, to lay in store.
Give me thy heart; I ask no more,
And in at my door thou shalt go.

Who is at my window? Who?
Go from my window! Go!
Cry no more there, like a stranger,
But in at my door thou go!

ANON
(1500)

ASH-WEDNESDAY

I

BECAUSE I do not hope to turn again
Because I do not hope
Because I do not hope to turn
Desiring this man's gift and that man's scope
I no longer strive to strive towards such things
(Why should the aged eagle stretch its wings?)
Why should I mourn
The vanished power of the usual reign?

Because I do not hope to know again
The infirm glory of the positive hour
Because I do not think
Because I know I shall not know
The one veritable transitory power
Because I cannot drink
There, where trees flower, and springs flow, for there is
nothing again

Because I know that time is always time
And place is always and only place
And what is actual is actual only for one time
And only for one place
I rejoice that things are as they are and
I renounce the blessed face
And renounce the voice

Because I cannot hope to turn again
Consequently I rejoice, having to construct something
Upon which to rejoice

Devotional

And pray to God to have mercy upon us
And I pray that I may forget
These matters that with myself I too much discuss
Too much explain
Because I do not hope to turn again
Let these words answer
For what is done, not to be done again
May the judgement not be too heavy upon us

Because these wings are no longer wings to fly
But merely vans to beat the air
The air which is now thoroughly small and dry
Smaller and dryer than the will
Teach us to care and not to care
Teach us to sit still.

Pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death
Pray for us now and at the hour of our death.

II

Lady, three white leopards sat under a juniper-tree
In the cool of the day, having fed to satiety
On my legs my heart my liver and that which had been
 contained
In the hollow round of my skull. And God said
Shall these bones live? shall these
Bones live? And that which had been contained
In the bones (which were already dry) said chirping:
Because of the goodness of this Lady
And because of her loveliness, and because
She honours the Virgin in meditation,
We shine with brightness. And I who am here dissembled
Proffer my deeds to oblivion, and my love
To the posterity of the desert and the fruit of the gourd.
It is this which recovers
628

My guts the strings of my eyes and the indigestible portions

Which the leopards reject. The Lady is withdrawn
In a white gown, to contemplation, in a white gown.
Let the whiteness of bones atone to forgetfulness.
There is no life in them. As I am forgotten
And would be forgotten, so I would forget
Thus devoted, concentrated in purpose. And God said
Prophecy to the wind, to the wind only for only
The wind will listen. And the bones sang chirping
With the burden of the grasshopper, saying

Lady of silences
Calm and distressed
Torn and most whole
Rose of memory
Rose of forgetfulness
Exhausted and life-giving
Worried reposeful
The single Rose
Is now the Garden
Where all loves end
Terminate torment
Of love unsatisfied
The greater torment
Of love satisfied
End of the endless
Journey to no end
Conclusion of all that
Is inconclusible
Speech without word and
Word of no speech
Grace to the Mother
For the Garden
Where all love ends.

Devotional

Under a juniper-tree the bones sang, scattered and shining
We are glad to be scattered, we did little good to each other,
Under a tree in the cool of the day, with the blessing of sand,
Forgetting themselves and each other, united
In the quiet of the desert. This is the land which ye
Shall divide by lot. And neither division nor unity
Matters. This is the land. We have our inheritance.

III

At the first turning of the second stair
I turned and saw below
The same shape twisted on the banister
Under the vapour in the fetid air
Struggling with the devil of the stairs who wears
The deceitful face of hope and of despair.

At the second turning of the second stair
I left them twisting, turning below;
There were no more faces and the stair was dark,
Damp, jagged, like an old man's mouth drivelling, beyond repair,
Or the toothed gullet of an aged shark.

At the first turning of the third stair
Was a slotted window bellied like the fig's fruit
And beyond the hawthorn blossom and a pasture scene
The broadbacked figure drest in blue and green
Enchanted the maytime with an antique flute.
Blown hair is sweet, brown hair over the mouth blown,
Lilac and brown hair;
Distraction, music of the flute, stops and steps of the
mind over the third stair,

Fading, fading; strength beyond hope and despair
Climbing the third stair.

Lord, I am not worthy
Lord, I am not worthy

but speak the word only.

IV

Who walked between the violet and the violet
Who walked between
The various ranks of varied green
Going in white and blue, in Mary's colour,
Talking of trivial things
In ignorance and in knowledge of eternal dolour
Who moved among the others as they walked,
Who then made strong the fountains and made fresh the
springs

Made cool the dry rock and made firm the sand
In blue of larkspur, blue of Mary's colour,
Sovegna vos

Here are the years that walk between, bearing
Away the fiddles and the flutes, restoring
One who moves in the time between sleep and waking,
wearing

White light folded, sheathed about her, folded.
The new years walk, restoring
Through a bright cloud of tears, the years, restoring
With a new verse the ancient rhyme. Redeem
The time. Redeem
The unread vision in the higher dream

Devotional

While jewelled unicorns draw by the gilded hearse.
The silent sister veiled in white and blue
Between the yews, behind the garden god,
Whose flute is breathless, bent her head and signed but
spoke no word

But the fountain sprang up and the bird sang down
Redeem the time, redeem the dream
The token of the word unheard, unspoken

Till the wind shake a thousand whispers from the yew

And after this our exile

v

If the lost word is lost, if the spent word is spent
If the unheard, unspoken
Word is unspoken, unheard;
Still is the unspoken word, the Word unheard,
The Word without a word, the Word within
The world and for the world;
And the light shone in darkness and
Against the Word the unstilled world still whirled
About the centre of the silent Word.

O my people, what have I done unto thee.

Where shall the word be found, where will the word
Resound? Not here, there is not enough silence
Not on the sea or on the islands, not
On the mainland, in the desert or the rain land,
For those who walk in darkness
Both in the day time and in the night time
The right time and the right place are not here
632

Devotional

No place of grace for those who avoid the face
No time to rejoice for those who walk among noise and
deny the voice

Will the veiled sister pray for
Those who walk in darkness, who chose thee and oppose
thee,
Those who are torn on the horn between season and
season, time and time, between
Hour and hour, word and word, power and power, those
who wait
In darkness? Will the veiled sister pray
For children at the gate
Who will not go away and cannot pray:
Pray for those who chose and oppose

O my people, what have I done unto thee.

Will the veiled sister between the slender
Yew trees pray for those who offend her
And are terrified and cannot surrender
And affirm before the world and deny between the rocks
In the last desert between the last blue rocks
The desert in the garden the garden in the desert
Of drouth, spitting from the mouth the withered apple-
seed.

O my people.

VI

Although I do not hope to turn again
Although I do not hope
Although I do not hope to turn

Devotional

Wavering between the profit and the loss
In this brief transit where the dreams cross
The dreamcrossed twilight between birth and dying
(Bless me father) though I do not wish to wish these
things
From the wide window towards the granite shore
The white sails still fly seaward, seaward flying
Unbroken wings

And the lost heart stiffens and rejoices
In the lost lilac and the lost sea voices
And the weak spirit quickens to rebel
For the bent golden-rod and the lost sea smell
Quickens to recover
The cry of quail and the whirling plover
And the blind eye creates
The empty forms between the ivory gates
And smell renews the salt savour of the sandy earth

This is the time of tension between dying and birth
The place of solitude where three dreams cross
Between blue rocks
But when the voices shaken from the yew-tree drift away
Let the other yew be shaken and reply.

Blessèd sister, holy mother, spirit of the fountain, spirit
of the garden,
Suffer us not to mock ourselves with falsehood
Teach us to care and not to care
Teach us to sit still
Even among these rocks,
Our peace in His will
And even among these rocks

634

Sister, mother
And spirit of the river, spirit of the sea,
Suffer me not to be separated

And let my cry come unto Thee.

T. S. ELIOT

THE HABIT OF PERFECTION

ELECTED Silence, sing to me
And beat upon my whorled ear,
Pipe me to pastures still and be
The music that I care to hear.

Shape nothing, lips; be lovely-dumb:
It is the shut, the curfew sent
From there where all surrenders come
Which only makes you eloquent.

Be shelléd, eyes, with double dark
And find the uncreated light:
This ruck and reel which you remark
Coils, keeps, and teases simple sight.

- Palate, the hutch of tasty lust,
Desire not to be rinsed with wine:
The can must be so sweet, the crust
So fresh that comes in fasts divine!

Nostrils, your careless breath that spend
Upon the stir and keep of pride,

Devotional

What relish shall the censers send
Along the sanctuary side!

O feel-of-primrose hands, O feet
That want the yield of plushy sward,
But you shall walk the golden street
And you unhouse and house the Lord.

And, Poverty, be thou the bride
And now the marriage feast begun,
And lily-coloured clothes provide
Your spouse not laboured-at nor spun.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

ODE ON THE MORNING
OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY

THIS is the month, and this the happy morn
Wherein the Son of Heaven's Eternal King
Of wedded maid and virgin mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring;
For so the holy sages once did sing
That He our deadly forfeit should release,
And with His Father work us a perpetual peace.

That glorious Form, that Light unsufferable,
And that far-beaming blaze of Majesty
Wherewith He went at Heaven's high council-table
To sit the midst of Trinal Unity,
He laid aside; and, here with us to be,
Forsook the courts of everlasting day,
And chose with us a darksome house of mortal clay.

Say, heavenly Muse, shall not thy sacred vein
Afford a present to the Infant God?
Hast thou no verse, no hymn, or solemn strain
To welcome Him to this His new abode,
Now while the heaven, by the sun's team untrod,
Hath took no print of the approaching light,
And all the spangled host keep watch in squadrons
 bright?

See how from far, upon the eastern road,
The star-led wizards haste with odours sweet:
O run, prevent them with thy humble ode
And lay it lowly at His blessed feet;
Have thou the honour first thy Lord to greet,
And join thy voice unto the Angel quire
From out His secret altar touch'd with hallow'd fire.

The Hymn

It was the winter wild,
While the heaven-born-Child,
All meanly wrapt in the rude manger lies;
Nature in awe to Him
Had doff'd her gaudy trim,
With her great Master so to sympathize:
It was no season then for her
To wanton with the sun, her lusty paramour.

Only with speeches fair
She woos the gentle air
To hide her guilty front with innocent snow;
And on her naked shame,
Pollute with sinful blame,
The saintly veil of maiden white to throw;
Confounded, that her Maker's eyes
Should look so near upon her foul deformities.

Devotional

But He, her fears to cease,
Sent down the meek-eyed Peace;
She, crown'd with olive green, came softly sliding
Down through the turning sphere,
His ready harbinger,
With turtle wing the amorous clouds dividing,
And waving wide her myrtle wand,
She strikes a universal peace through sea and land.

No war, or battle's sound
Was heard the world around:
The idle spear and shield were high uphung;
The hookèd chariot stood
Unstain'd with hostile blood,
The trumpet spake not to the armèd throng
And kings sat still with awful eye,
As if they surely knew their sovran Lord was by.

But peaceful was the night
Wherein the Prince of Light
His reign of peace upon the earth began:
The winds, with wonder whist,
Smoothly the waters kist,
Whispering new joys to the mild ocean—
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmèd wave.

The stars, with deep amaze
Stand fix'd in steadfast gaze,
Bending one way their precious influence;
And will not take their flight,
For all the morning light,
Or Lucifer that often warn'd them thence;
But in their glimmering orbs did glow,
Until their Lord Himself bespake, and bid them go.

And though the shady gloom
Had given day her room,
The sun himself withheld his wonted speed,
And hid his head for shame,
As his inferior flame
The new-enlighten'd world no more should need;
He saw a greater Sun appear
Than his bright throne, or burning axletree could bear.

The shepherds on the lawn,
Or ere the point of dawn,
Sate simply chatting in a rustic row;
Full little thought they than
That the mighty Pan
Was kindly come to live with them below;
Perhaps their loves, or else their sheep,
Was all that did their silly thoughts so busy keep.

When such music sweet
Their hearts and ears did greet,
As never was by mortal finger strook—
Divinely-warbled voice
Answering the stringèd noise,
As all their souls in blissful rapture took:
The air, such pleasure loth to lose,
With thousand echoes still prolongs each heavenly ciose.

Nature, that heard such sound
Beneath the hollow round
Of Cynthia's seat the airy region thrilling,
Now was almost won
To think her part was done,
And that her reign had here its last fulfilling;
She knew such harmony alone
Could hold all Heaven and Earth in happier union.

Devotional

At last surrounds their sight
A globe of circular light,
That with long beams the shamed night array'd;
The helmèd Cherubim
And sworded Seraphim,
Are seen in glittering ranks with wings display'd,
Harping in loud and solemn quire,
With unexpressive notes, to Heaven's new-born Heir.

Such music (as 'tis said)
Before was never made
But when of old the Sons of Morning sung,
While the Creator great
His constellations set,
And the well-balanced world on hinges hung,
And cast the dark foundations deep,
And bid the weltering waves their oozy channel keep.

Ring out, ye crystal spheres!
Once bless our human ears,
If ye have power to touch our senses so;
And let your silver chime
Move in melodious time;
And let the bass of heaven's deep organ blow;
And with your ninefold harmony
Make up full consort to the angelic symphony.

For if such holy song
Enwrap our fancy long,
Time will run back, and fetch the age of gold,
And speckled Vanity
Will sicken soon and die,
And leprous Sin will melt from earthly mould,
And Hell itself will pass away,
And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering day.

Yea, Truth, and Justice then
Will down return to men,
Orb'd in a rainbow; and, like glories wearing,
Mercy will sit between
Throned in celestial sheen,
With radiant feet the tissued clouds down steering;
And Heaven, as at some festival,
Will open wide the gates of her high palace hall.

But wisest Fate says No;
This must not yet be so;
The Babe yet lies in smiling infancy,
That on the bitter cross
Must redeem our loss;
So both Himself and us to glorify:
Yet first, to those ychain'd in sleep,
The wakeful trump of doom must thunder through the
deep,

With such a horrid clang
As on Mount Sinai rang
While the red fire and smouldering clouds outbrake:
The aged Earth aghast
With terror of that blast,
Shall from the surface to the centre shake;
When, at the world's last session,
The dreadful Judge in middle air shall spread His throne.

And then at last our bliss
Full and perfect is,
But, now begins; for from this happy day
Th' old Dragon under ground
In straiter limits bound,
Not half so far casts his usurpèd sway,
And wroth to see his kingdom fail,
Swings the scaly horror of his folded tail.

Devotional

The Oracles are dumb;
No voice or hideous hum
Runs through the archèd roof in words deceiving.
Apollo from his shrine
Can no more divine,
With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.
No nightly trance or breathèd spell,
Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic cell.

The lonely mountains o'er,
And the resounding shore,
A voice of weeping heard, and loud lament:
From haunted spring and dale
Edged with poplar pale,
The parting Genius is with sighing sent;
With flower-inwoven tresses torn
The Nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn.

In consecrated earth,
And on the holy hearth,
The Lars and Lemures moan with midnight plaint,
In urns, and altars round,
A drear and dying sound
Affrights the Flamens at their service quaint;
And the chill marble seems to sweat,
While each peculiar Power foregoes his wonted seat.

Peor and Baalim
Forsake their temples dim,
With that twice-batter'd god of Palestine,
And moonèd Ashtaroth
Heaven's queen and mother both,
Now sits not girt with tapers' holy shine;
The Lybic Hammon shrinks his horn,
In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Thammuz
mourn.

And sullen Moloch, fled,
Hath left in shadows dread,
His burning idol all of blackest hue,
In vain with cymbals' ring,
They call the grisly king,
In dismal dance about the furnace blue;
The brutish gods of Nile as fast,
Isis, and Orus, and the dog Anubis haste.

Nor is Osiris seen
In Memphian grove, or green,
Trampling the unshower'd grass with lovings loud:
Nor can he be at rest
Within his sacred chest,
Nought but profoundest Hell can be his shroud,
In vain with timbrell'd anthems dark
The sable-stolèd sorcerers bear his worshipt ark.

He feels from Juda's land
The dreaded Infant's hand,
The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyen;
Nor all the gods beside,
Longer dare abide,
Not Typhon huge ending in snaky twine:
Our Babe, to show His Godhead true,
Can in His swaddling bands control the damnèd crew.

So, when the sun in bed,
Curtain'd with cloudy red,
Pillows his chin upon an orient wave,
The flocking shadows pale,
Troop to the infernal jail,
Each fetter'd ghost slips to his several grave;
And the yellow-skirted fays,
Fly after the night-steeds, leaving their moon-loved maze.

Devotional

But see! the Virgin blest,
Hath laid her Babe to rest;
Time is, our tedious song should here have ending,
Heaven's youngest-teem'd star
Hath fix'd her polish'd car,
Her sleeping Lord with hand-maid lamp attending;
And all about the courtly stable,
Bright-harness'd Angels sit in order serviceable.

JOHN MILTON

ON A DROP OF DEW

SEE how the orient dew,
Shed from the bosom of the morn
Into the blowing roses,
Yet careless of its mansion new;
For the clear region where 'twas born
Round in itself encloses:
And in its little globe's extent,
Frames as it can its native element.
How it the purple flower does slight,
Scarce touching where it lies,
But gazing back upon the skies,
Shines with a mournful light;
Like its own tear,
Because so long divided from the sphere.
Restless it rolls and unsecure,
Trembling lest it grow impure:
Till the warm sun pity its pain,
And to the skies exhale it back again.
So the soul, that drop, that ray
Of the clear fountain of eternal day,
Could it within the human flower be seen,
Remembering still its former height,

Shuns the sweet leaves and blossoms green;
And, recollecting its own light,
Does, in its pure and circling thoughts, express
The greater heaven in an heaven less.
In how coy a figure wound,
Every way it turns away;
So the world excluding round,
Yet receiving in the day.
Dark beneath, but bright above:
Here disdaining, there in love.
How loose and easy hence to go:
How girt and ready to ascend.
Moving but on a point below,
It all about does upwards bend.
Such did the manna's sacred dew distil;
White, and entire, though congealed and chill.
Congealed on earth; but does, dissolving, run
Into the glories of the Almighty Sun.

ANDREW MARVELL

AT THE ROUND EARTH'S IMAGINED CORNERS

At the round earth's imagined corners, blow
Your trumpets, angels; and arise, arise
From death, you numberless infinities
Of souls, and to your scattered bodies go;
All whom the flood did, and fire shall o'erthrow,
All whom war, dearth, age, agues, tyrannies,
Despair, law, chance hath slain, and you whose eyes
Shall behold God and never taste death's woe.
But let them sleep, Lord, and me mourn a space,

Devotional

For if above all these my sins abound,
'Tis late to ask abundance of thy grace
When we are there; here on this lowly ground
Teach me how to repent; for that's as good
As if thou'hadst sealed my pardon with thy blood.

JOHN DONNE

THE PULLEY

WHEN God at first made man,
Having a glass of blessings standing by,
"Let us," said he, "pour on him all we can;
Let the world's riches, which disperséd lie,
Contract into a span."

So strength first made a way,
Then beauty flowed, then wisdom, honour, pleasure;
When almost all was out, God made a stay,
Perceiving that, alone of all his treasure,
Rest in the bottom lay.

"For if I should," said he,
"Bestow this jewel also on my creature,
He would adore my gifts instead of me,
And rest in Nature, not the God of Nature;
So both should losers be.

Yet let him keep the rest,
But keep them with repining, restlessness;
Let him be rich and weary, that at least,
If goodness lead him not, yet weariness
May toss him to my breast."

GEORGE HERBERT

DOWN IN THE DEPTH

Down in the depth of mine iniquity,
That ugly center of infernal spirits,
Where each sin feels her own deformity,
In these peculiar torments she inherits,
Deprived of human graces, and divine,
Even there appears this saving God of mine.

And in this fatal mirror of transgression,
Shows man as fruit of his degeneration,
The error's ugly infinite impression,
Which bears the faithless down to desperation;
Deprived of human graces and divine,
Even there appears this saving God of mine.

In power and truth, almighty and eternal,
Which on the sin reflects strange desolation,
With glory scourging all the spirits infernal,
And uncreated hell with unprivation;
Deprived of human graces, not divine,
Even there appears this saving God of mine.

For on this spiritual cross condemned lying,
To pains infernal by eternal doom,
I see my Saviour for the same sins dying,
And from that hell I feared, to free me come;
Deprived of human graces, not divine,
Thus hath his death raised up this soul of mine.

FULKE GREVILLE, LORD BROOKE .

ST. AGNES' EVE

DEEP on the convent-roof the snows
Are sparkling to the moon:
My breath to heaven like vapour goes:
May my soul follow soon!
The shadows of the convent-towers
Slant down the snowy sward,
Still creeping with the creeping hours
That lead me to my Lord:
Make Thou my spirit pure and clear
As are the frosty skies,
Or this first snowdrop of the year
That in my bosom lies.

As these white robes are soil'd and dark,
To yonder shining ground;
As this pale taper's earthly spark,
To yonder argent round;
So shows my soul before the Lamb,
My spirit before Thee;
So in mine earthly house I am,
To that I hope to be.
Break up the heavens, O Lord! and far,
Thine all yon starlight keen,
Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star,
In raiment white and clean.

He lifts me to the golden doors;
The flashes come and go;
All heaven bursts her starry floors.
And strows her lights below,
And deepens on and up! the gates
Roll back, and far within

Devotional

For me the Heavenly Bridegroom waits,
To make me pure of sin.
The sabbaths of Eternity,
One sabbath deep and wide—
A light upon the shining sea—
The Bridegroom with his bride!

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

THE NEW JERUSALEM

AND did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountains green?
And was the holy Lamb of God
On England's pleasant pastures seen?

And did the Countenance Divine
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here
Among those dark Satanic Mills?

Bring me my bow of burning gold!
Bring me my arrows of desire!
Bring me my spear! O clouds, unfold!
Bring me my chariot of fire!

I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land.

WILLIAM BLAKE

REDEMPTION

HAVING been tenant long to a rich lord,
Not thriving, I resolved to be bold,
And make a suit unto him, to afford
A new small-rented lease, and cancel the old.
In heaven at his manor I him sought:
They told me there, that he was lately gone
About some land, which he had dearly bought
Long since on earth to take possession.
I straight returned, and knowing his great birth,
Sought him accordingly in great resorts;
In cities, theatres, gardens, parks, and courts:
At length I heard a ragged noise and mirth
Of thieves and murderers: there I him espied,
Who straight, *Your suit is granted*, said, and died.

GEORGE HERBERT

HYMN

THE spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky,
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great Original proclaim.
Th' unwearied Sun from day to day
Does his Creator's power display;
And publishes to every land
The work of an Almighty hand.

Soon as the evening shades prevail,
The Moon takes up the wondrous tale;
And nightly to the listening Earth
Repeats the story of her birth:

Whilst all the stars that round her burn,
And all the planets in their turn,
Confirm the tidings as they roll,
And spread the truth from pole to pole.

What though in solemn silence all
Move round the dark terrestrial ball;
What though nor real voice nor sound
Amidst their radiant orbs be found?
In Reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice;
For ever singing as they shine,
"The Hand that made us is divine."

JOSEPH ADDISON

BATTER MY HEART, THREE-PERSON'D GOD

BATTER my heart, three-person'd God; for, you
As yet but knock, breathe, shine, and seek to mend;
That I may rise, and stand, o'erthrow me, and bend
Your force, to break, blow, burn and make me new.
I, like an usurpt town, to another due,
Labour to admit you, but Oh, to no end.
Reason, your viceroys in me, me should defend
But is captiv'd, and proves weak or untrue.
Yet dearly I love you, and would be lov'd faine,
But am betroth'd unto your enemy;
Divorce me, untie, or break that knot again,
Take me to you, imprison me, for I
Except you enthrall me, never shall be free,
Nor ever chaste, except you ravish me. *P v l 2 2 x*

JOHN DONNE

A HYMN TO GOD THE FATHER

I

WILT thou forgive that sin where I begun,
Which is my sin, though it were done before?
Wilt thou forgive those sins, through which I run,
And do run still: though still I do deplore?
When thou hast done, thou hast not done,
For, I have more.

II

Wilt thou forgive that sin by which I have won
Others to sin? and, made my sin their door?
Wilt thou forgive that sin which I did shun
A year, or two: but wallowed in, a score?
When thou hast done, thou hast not done,
For, I have more.

III

I have a sin of fear, that when I have spun
My last thread, I shall perish on the shore;
Swear by thy self, that at my death thy son
Shall shine as he shines now, and heretofore;
And, having done that, Thou hast done,
I fear no more.

JOHN DONNE

A SONG FOR
ST. CECILIA'S DAY, 1687

FROM harmony, from heavenly harmony,
 This universal frame began:
When nature underneath a heap
 Of jarring atoms lay,
And could not heave her head,
The tuneful voice was heard from high,
 'Arise, ye more than dead!'
Then cold, and hot, and moist, and dry,
 In order to their stations leap,
And Music's power obey.
From harmony, from heavenly harmony,
 This universal frame began:
From harmony to harmony
Through all the compass of the notes it ran,
The diapason closing full in Man.

What passion cannot Music raise and quell?
 When Jubal struck the chorded shell,
His listening brethren stood around.
 And, wondering, on their faces fell
To worship that celestial sound:
Less than a God they thought there could not dwell
 Within the hollow of that shell,
That spoke so sweetly, and so well.
What passion cannot Music raise and quell?

The trumpet's loud clangour
 Excites us to arms,
With shrill notes of anger,
 And mortal alarms.

Devotional

The double double double beat
Of the thundering drum
Cries Hark! the foes come;
Charge, charge, 'tis too late to retreat!

The soft complaining flute,
In dying notes, discovers
The woes of hopeless lovers,
Whose dirge is whisper'd by the warbling lute.

Sharp violins proclaim
Their jealous pangs and desperation,
Fury, frantic indignation,
Depth of pains, and height of passion,
For the fair, disdainful dame.

But O, what art can teach,
What human voice can reach,
The sacred organ's praise?
Notes inspiring holy love,
Notes that wing their heavenly ways
To mend the choirs above.

Orpheus could lead the savage race;
And trees unrooted left their place,
Sequacious of the lyre;
But bright Cecilia rais'd the wonder higher:
When to her organ vocal breath was given,
An angel heard, and straight appear'd
Mistaking Earth for Heaven.

GRAND CHORUS

As from the power of sacred lays
The spheres began to move,

And sung the great Creator's praise
To all the Blest above;
So when the last and dreadful hour
This crumbling pageant shall devour,
The trumpet shall be heard on high,
The dead shall live, the living die,
And Music shall untune the sky!

JOHN DRYDEN

THE WORLD

I SAW eternity the other night
Like a great ring of pure and endless light,
All calm as it was bright;
And round beneath it, time in hours, days, years,
Driv'n by the spheres,
Like a vast shadow moved, in which the world
And all her train were hurled:
The doting lover in his quaintest strain
Did there complain;
Near him his lute, his fancy, and his flights,
Wit's sour delights,
With gloves and knots, the silly snares of pleasure,
Yet his dear treasure,
All scattered lay, while he his eyes did pore
Upon a flower.

The darksome statesman, hung with weights and woe,
Like a thick midnight fog moved there so slow
He did not stay, nor go;
Condemning thoughts, like sad eclipses, scowl
Upon his soul,

Devotional

And clouds of crying witnesses without
Pursued him with one shout;
Yet digged the mole, and lest his ways be found
Worked underground,
Where he did clutch his prey, but One did see
That policy;
Churches and altars fed him; perjuries
Were gnats and flies;
It rained about him blood and tears, but he
Drank them as free.

The fearful miser on a heap of rust
Sat pining all his life there, did scarce trust
His own hands with the dust,
Yet would not place one piece above, but lives
In fear of thieves.
Thousands there were as frantic as himself,
And hugged each one his pelf:
The downright epicure placed heav'n in sense,
And scorned pretense;
While others, slipped into a wide excess,
Said little less;
The weaker sort slight trivial wares enslave,
Who think them brave;
And poor despised truth sat counting by
Their victory.

Yet some, who all this while did weep and sing,
And sing and weep, soared up into the ring;
But most would use no wing.
O fools, said I, thus to prefer dark night
Before true light,
To live in grots and caves, and hate the day
Because it shows the way,
'The way which from this dead and dark abode

Leads up to God,
A way where you might tread the sun, and be
More bright than he.
But as I did their madness so discuss,
One whispered thus:
This ring the bridegroom did for none provide
But for his bride.

HENRY VAUGHAN

THE COLLAR

I STRUCK the board, and cried, No more!
I will abroad.
What? Shall I ever sigh and pine?
My lines and life are free, free as the road,
Loose as the wind, as large as store.
Shall I be still in suit?
Have I no harvest but a thorn
To let me blood, and not restore
What I have lost with cordial fruit?
Sure there was wine
Before my sighs did dry it. There was corn
Before my tears did drown it.
Is the year only lost to me?
Have I no bays to crown it?
No flowers, no garlands gay? All blasted?
All wasted?
Not so, my heart! But there is fruit,
And thou hast hands.
Recover all thy sigh-blown age
On double pleasures. Leave thy cold dispute
Of what is fit and not, Forsake thy cage,
Thy rope of sands,

Devotional

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Thy rope of sands,

Devotional

Which petty thoughts have made, and made to thee,
Good cable, to enforce and draw,
And be thy law,
While thou didst wink and wouldst not see.
Away! Take heed!
I will abroad.
Call in thy death's head there. Tie up thy fears.
He that forbears
To suit and serve his need
Deserves his load.
But as I raved and grew more fierce and wild
At every word,
Methought I heard one calling, *Child!*
And I replied, *My Lord.*

GEORGE HERBERT

GLORIOUS THE SUN
IN MID CAREER

GLORIOUS the sun in mid career;
Glorious th' assembled fires appear;
Glorious the comet's train;
Glorious the trumpet and alarm;
Glorious th' almighty stretch'd-out arm;
Glorious th' enraptur'd main:

Glorious the northern lights a-stream;
Glorious the song, when God's the theme;
Glorious the thunder's roar;

Glorious hosannah from the den;
Glorious the catholic amen;
Glorious the martyr's gore:

Glorious—more glorious, is the crown
Of Him that brought salvation down
By meekness, call'd thy Son;
Thou that stupendous truth believ'd,
And now the matchless deed's achiev'd,
Determin'd, dar'd, and done.

CHRISTOPHER SMART
(from *The Song to David*)

THE BURNING BABE

As I in hoary winter's night
Stood shivering in the snow,
Surprised I was with sudden heat
Which made my heart to glow;
And lifting up a fearful eye
To view what fire was near,
A pretty babe all burning bright
Did in the air appear;
Who, scorched with excessive heat,
Such floods of tears did shed,
As though His floods should quench His flames,
Which with His tears were bred:
"Alas!" quoth He, "but newly born
In fiery heats I fry,
Yet none approach to warm their hearts
Or feel my fire but I

Devotional

"My faultless breast the furnace is;
The fuel, wounding thorns;
Love is the fire, and sighs the smoke;
The ashes, shames and scorns;
The fuel Justice layeth on,
And Mercy blows the coals,
The metal in this furnace wrought
Are men's defiled souls:
For which, as now on fire I am
To work them to their good,
So will I melt into a bath,
To wash them in my blood."
With this He vanish'd out of sight
And swiftly shrunk away,
And straight I callèd unto mind
That it was Christmas Day.

ROBERT SOUTHWELL

RING OUT, WILD BELLS

RING out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light:
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Devotional

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times;
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease,
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

A great man

O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN!

O CAPTAIN! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,
The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought
is won,

The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and
daring;

But O heart! heart! heart!

O the bleeding drops of red,

Where on the deck my Captain lies,

Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills,
For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for you the
shores a-crowding,

For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces
turning;

Here Captain! dear father!

The arm beneath your head!

It is some dream that on the deck,

You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will,
The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed and
done,

From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object
won;

Exult O shores, and ring O bells!

But I with mournful tread,

Walk the deck my Captain lies,

Fallen cold and dead.

WALT WHITMAN

THE MASTER

*(Lincoln. Supposed to have been written not
long after the Civil War)*

A FLYING word from here and there
Had sown the name at which we sneered,
But soon the name was everywhere,
To be reviled and then revered:
A presence to be loved and feared,
We cannot hide it, or deny
That we, the gentlemen who jeered,
May be forgotten by and by.

He came when days were perilous
And hearts of men were sore beguiled;
And having made his note of us,
He pondered and was reconciled.
Was ever master yet so mild
As he, and so untamable?
We doubted, even when he smiled,
Not knowing what he knew so well.

He knew that undeceiving fate
Would shame us whom he served unsought;
He knew that he must wince and wait—
The jest of those for whom he fought;
He knew devoutly what he thought
Of us and of our ridicule;
He knew that we must all be taught
Like little children in a school.

We gave a glamour to the task
That he encountered and saw through,

A great man

But little of us did he ask,
And little did we ever do.
And what appears if we review
The season when we railed and chaffed?
It is the face of one who knew
That we were learning while we laughed.

The face that in our vision feels
Again the venom that we flung,
Transfigured to the world reveals
The vigilance to which we clung.
Shrewd, hallowed, harassed, and among
The mysteries that are untold,
The face we see was never young,
Nor could it ever have been old.

For he, to whom we had applied
Our shopman's test of age and worth,
Was elemental when he died,
As he was ancient at his birth:
The saddest among kings of earth,
Bowed with a galling crown, this man
Met rancor with a cryptic mirth,
Laconic—and Olympian.

The love, the grandeur, and the fame
Are bounded by the world alone;
The calm, the smoldering, and the flame
Of awful patience were his own:
With him they are forever flown
Past all our fond self-shadowings,
Wherewith we cumber the Unknown
As with inept Icarian wings.

For we were not as other men:
'Twas ours to sour and his to see.
But we are coming down again,
And we shall come down pleasantly;
Nor shall we longer disagree
On what it is to be sublime,
But flourish in our perigee
And have one Titan at a time.

EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON

LOVING IN TRUTH

LOVING in truth, and fain in verse my love to show,
That she, dear she, might take some pleasure of my pain,
Pleasure might cause her read, reading might make her
 know,
Knowledge might pity win, and pity grace obtain,—
I sought fit words to paint the blackest face of woe;
Studying inventions fine, her wits to entertain,
Oft turning others' leaves to see if thence would flow
Some fresh and fruitful showers upon my sun-burned
 brain.
But words came halting forth, wanting invention's stay,
Invention, nature's child, fled step-dame Study's blows,
And others' feet still seemed but strangers in my way.
Thus, great with child to speak, and helpless in my throes,
Biting my truant pen, beating myself for spite,
Fool, said my muse to me, look in thy heart and write.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY
665

THE SOLITARY LYRE

WHEREFORE, unlaurell'd Boy,
Whom the contemptuous Muse will not inspire,
With a sad kind of joy
Still sing'st thou to thy solitary lyre?

The melancholy winds
Pour through unnumber'd reeds their idle woes,
And every Naiad finds
A stream to weep her sorrow as it flows.

Her sighs unto the air
The Wood-maid's native oak doth broadly tell,
And Echo's fond despair
Intelligible rocks re-syllable.

Wherefore then should not I,
Albeit no haughty Muse my heart inspire,
Fated of grief to die,
Impart it to my solitary lyre?

GEORGE DARLEY

I'LL LIVE IN THIS POOR RIME

Nor mine own fears, nor the prophetic soul
Of the wide world dreaming on things to come,
Can yet the lease of my true love control,
Suppos'd as forfeit to a confin'd doom.
The mortal moon hath her eclipse endur'd,

Poets and poetry

And the sad augurs mock their own presage;
Uncertainties now crown themselves assur'd,
And peace proclaims olives of endless age.
Now with the drops of this most balmy time
My love looks fresh, and Death to me subscribes,
Since, spite of him, I'll live in this poor rime,
While he insults o'er dull and speechless tribes:
And thou in this shalt find thy monument,
When tyrants' crests and tombs of brass are spent.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

TO THE MUSES

Whether on Ida's shady brow
Or in the chambers of the East,
The chambers of the Sun, that now
From ancient melody have ceased;

Whether in heaven ye wander fair,
Or the green corners of the earth,
Or the blue regions of the air
Where the melodious winds have birth;

Whether on crystal rocks ye rove,
Beneath the bosom of the sea,
Wandering in many a coral grove;
Fair Nine, forsaking Poetry;

How have you left the ancient love
That bards of old enjoy'd in you!
The languid strings do scarcely move,
The sound is forced, the notes are few.

WILLIAM BLAKE

POUR L'ÉLECTION DE SON
SEPULCHRE

E. P. Ode

I

For three years, out of key with his time,
He strove to resuscitate the dead art
Of poetry; to maintain 'the sublime'
In the old sense. Wrong from the start—

No, hardly, but seeing he had been born
In a half-savage country, out of date;
Bent resolutely on wringing lilies from the acorn;
Capaneus; trout for factitious bait;

Ἰδμεν γὰρ τοι πᾶνθ', ὅς' ἐνὶ Τροίῃ
Caught in the unstopped ear;
Giving the rocks small lee-way
The chopped seas held him, therefore, that year.

His true Penelope was Flaubert,
He fished by obstinate isles;
Observed the elegance of Circe's hair
Rather than the mottoes on sundials.

Unaffected by 'the march of events',
He passed from men's memory in *l'an trentiesme*,
De son eage; the case presents
No adjunct to the Muses' diadem.

II

The age demanded an image
Of its accelerated grimace,
Something for the modern stage,
Not, at any rate, an Attic grace;

Not, not certainly, the obscure reveries
Of the inward gaze;
Better mendacities
Than the classics in paraphrase!

The 'age demanded' chiefly a mould in plaster,
Made with no loss of time,
A prose kinema, not, not assuredly, alabaster
Or the 'sculpture' of rhyme.

III

The tea-rose tea-gown, etc.
Supplants the mousseline of Cos,
The pianola 'replaces'
Sappho's barbitos.

Christ follows Dionysus,
Phallic and ambrosial
Made way for macerations;
Caliban casts out Ariel.

All things are a flowing,
Sage Heracleitus says;
But a tawdry cheapness
Shall outlast our days.

Even the Christian beauty
Defects—after Samothrace;

Poets and poetry

We see τὸ καλόν
Decreed in the market-place.

Faun's flesh is not to us,
Nor the saint's vision.
We have the Press for wafer;
Franchise for circumcision.

All men, in law, are equals.
Free of Pisistratus,
We choose a knave or an eunuch
To rule over us.

O bright Apollo,
τὴν ἄνδρα, τὴν ἥρωα, τίνα θεόν
What god, man, or hero
Shall I place a tin wreath upon!

IV

These fought in any case,
and some believing,
pro domo, in any case . . .

Some quick to arm,
some for adventure,
some from fear of weakness,
some from fear of censure,
some for love of slaughter, in imagination,
learning later . . .
some in fear, learning love of slaughter;

Died some, pro patria,
non 'dulce' non 'et decor' . . .

Poets and poetry

walked eye-deep in hell
believing in old men's lies, then unbelieving
came home, home to a lie,
home to many deceits,
home to old lies and new infamy;
usury age-old and age-thick
and liars in public places.

Daring as never before, wastage as never before.
Young blood and high blood,
fair cheeks, and fine bodies;

fortitude as never before

frankness as never before,
disillusions as never told in the old days,
hysterias, trench confessions,
laughter out of dead bellies.

v

There died a myriad,
And of the best, among them,
For an old bitch gone in the teeth,
For a botched civilization,

Charm, smiling at the good mouth,
quick eyes gone under earth's lid,

For two gross of broken statues,
For a few thousand battered books.

EZRA POUND

A COAT

I MADE my song a coat
Covered with cmbroideries
Out of old mythologies
From heel to throat;
But the fools caught it,
Wore it in the world's eyes
As though they'd wrought it.
Song, let them take it,
For there's more enterprise
In walking naked.

W. B. YEATS

IMAGINATION

THE lunatic, the lover, and the poet,
Are of imagination all compact;
One sees more devils than vast hell can hold,
That is, the madman; the lover, all as frantic,
Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt:
The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
And, as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

(from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*)

A LITTLE LEARNING

A little learning is a dang'rous thing;
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring:
There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
And drinking largely sobers us again.
Fir'd at first sight with what the Muse imparts,
In fearless youth we tempt the heights of Arts,
While from the bounded level of our mind,
Short views we take, nor see the lengths behind;
But more advanc'd, behold with strange surprise
New distant scenes of endless science rise!

So pleas'd at first the tow'ring Alps we try,
Mount o'er the vales, and seem to tread the sky,
Th' eternal snows appear already past,
And the first clouds and mountains seem the last:
But, those attain'd, we tremble to survey
The growing labours of the lengthen'd way,
Th' increasing prospect tires our wand'ring eyes.
Hills peep o'er hills, and Alps on Alps arise!

A perfect Judge will read each work of Wit
With the same spirit that its author writ:
Survey the Whole, nor seek slight faults to find
Where nature moves, and rapture warms the mind;
Nor lose, for that malignant dull delight,
The gen'rous pleasure to be charm'd with wit.
But in such lays as neither ebb, nor flow,
Correctly cold, and regularly low,
That shunning faults, one quiet tenour keep;
We cannot blame indeed—but we may sleep.
In Wit, as Nature, what affects our hearts
Is not th' exactness of peculiar parts;
'Tis not a lip, or eye, we beauty call,
But the joint force and full result of all.

Poets and poetry

Thus when we view some well-proportion'd dome
(The world's just wonder, and ev'n thine, O Romel)
No single parts unequally surprise,
All comes united to th' admiring eyes;
No monstrous height, or breadth, or length appear;
The Whole at once is bold, and regular.

ALEXANDER POPE
(from *The Essay on Criticism*)

EPITAPH ON SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

SILENCE augmenteth grief, writing increaseth rage,
Staled are my thoughts, which loved and lost the wonder
of our age:
Yet quickened now with fire, though dead with frost ere
now,
Enraged I write I know not what; dead, quick, I know
not how.

Hard-hearted minds relent and rigour's tears abound,
And envy strangely rues his end, in whom no fault she
found.
Knowledge her light hath lost; valour hath slain her
knight.
Sidney is dead; dead is my friend; dead is the world's
delight.

Place, pensive, wails his fall whose presence was her
pride;
Time crieth out, "My ebb is come; his life was my spring
tide."
Fame mourns in that she lost the ground of her reports;
Each living wight laments his lack, and all in sundry sorts.

Poets and poetry

He was (woe worth that word!) to each well-thinking
mind
A spotless friend, a matchless man, whose virtue ever
shined,
Declaring in his thoughts, his life, and that he writ,
Highest conceits, longest foresights, and deepest works
of wit.

He, only like himself, was second unto none,
Whose death (though life) we rue, and wrong, and all in
vain do moan.
Their loss, not him, wail they, that fill the world with
cries,
Death slew not him, but he made death his ladder to the
skies.

Now sink of sorrow I, who live, the more the wrong!
Who wishing death, whom death denies, whose thread is
all too long;
Who tied to wretched life, who looks for no relief,
Must spend my ever dying days in never ending grief.

Heart's ease and only I, like parallels, run on,
Whose equal length keep equal breadth, and never meet
in one;
Yet for not wronging him, my thoughts, my sorrow's cell,
Shall not run out, though leak they will, for liking him so
well.

Farewell to you, my hopes, my wonted waking dreams,
Farewell, sometimes enjoyed joy; eclipsed are thy beams.
Farewell, self-pleasing thoughts, which quietness brings
forth;
And farewell, friendship's sacred league, uniting minds
of worth.

Poets and poetry

And farewell, merry heart, the gift of guiltless minds,
And all sports which for life's restore variety assigns;
Let all that sweet is void; in me no mirth may dwell.
Philip, the cause of all this woe, my life's content, farewell!

Now rhyme, the son of rage, which art no kin to skill,
And endless grief, which deadens my life, yet knows not
how to kill,
Go, seek that hapless tomb, which if ye hap to find,
Salute the stones, that keep the limbs, that held so good
a mind.

FULKE GREVILLE, LORD BROOKE

ODE

We are the music-makers,
And we are the dreamers of dreams,
Wandering by lone sea-breakers,
And sitting by desolate streams;
World-losers and world-forsakers,
On whom the pale moon gleams:
Yet we are the movers and shakers
Of the world for ever, it seems.

With wonderful deathless ditties
We build up the world's great cities,
And out of a fabulous story
We fashion an empire's glory:
One man with a dream, at pleasure,
Shall go forth and conquer a crown;
And three with a new song's measure
Can trample an empire down.

We, in the ages lying
In the buried past of the earth,
Built Nineveh with our sighing,
And Babel itself with our mirth;
And o'erthrew them with prophesying
To the old of the new world's worth;
For each age is a dream that is dying.
Or one that is coming to birth.

A. W. E. O'SHAUGHNESSY

NOT MARBLE, NOR THE GILDED MONUMENTS

Nor marble, nor the gilded monuments
Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme;
But you shall shine more bright in these contents
Than unswept stone, besmear'd with sluttish time.
When wasteful war shall statues overturn,
And broils root out the work of masonry,
Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn
The living record of your memory.
'Gainst death and all-oblivious enmity
Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room
Even in the eyes of all posterity
That wear this world out to the ending doom.
So, till the judgment that yourself arise,
You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

ON FIRST LOOKING INTO
CHAPMAN'S HOMER

MUCH have I travelled in the realms of gold,
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told,
That deep-browed Homer ruled as his demesne:
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken:
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

JOHN KEATS

CHAPLINESQUE

WE make our meek adjustments,
Contented with such random consolations
As the wind deposits
In slithered and too ample pockets.

For we can still love the world, who find
A famished kitten on the step, and know
Recesses for it from the fury of the street,
Or warm torn elbow coverts.

Class struggle

We will sidestep, and to the final smirk
Dally the doom of that inevitable thumb
That slowly chafes its puckered index toward us,
Facing the dull squint with what innocence
And what surprise!

And yet these fine collapses are not lies
More than the pirouettes of any pliant cane;
Our obsequies are, in a way, no enterprise.
We can evade you, and all else but the heart:
What blame to us if the heart live on.

The game enforces smirks; but we have seen
The moon in lonely alleys make
A grail of laughter of an empty ash can,
And through all sound of gaiety and quest
Have heard a kitten in the wilderness.

HART CRANE

THIRTY BOB A WEEK

I COULDN'T touch a step and turn a screw,
And set the blooming world a-work for me,
Like such as cut their teeth—I hope, like you—
On the handle of a skeleton gold key;
I cut mine on a leek, which I eat it every week:
I'm a clerk at thirty bob as you can see.

But I don't allow it's luck and all a toss;
There's no such thing as being starred and crossed;
It's just the power of some to be a boss,
And the bally power of others to be bossed:

Class struggle

I face the music, sir; you bet I ain't a cur;
Strike me lucky if I don't believe I'm lost!

For like a mole I journey in the dark,
A-travelling along the underground
From my Pillar'd Halls and broad Suburban Park,
To come the daily dull official round;
And home again at night with my pipe all alight,
A-scheming how to count ten bob a pound.

And it's often very cold and very wet,
And my missis stitches towels for a hunks;
And the Pillar'd Halls is half of it to let—
Three rooms about the size of travelling trunks.
And we cough, my wife and I, to dislocate a sigh,
When the noisy little kids are in their bunks.

But you never hear her do a growl or whine,
For she's made of flint and roses, very odd;
And I've got to cut my meaning rather fine,
Or I'd blubber, for I'm made of greens and sod:
So p'r'aps we are in Hell for all that I can tell,
And lost and damn'd and served up hot to God.

I ain't blaspheming, Mr. Silver-tongue;
I'm saying things a bit beyond your art:
Of all the rummy starts you ever sprung,
Thirty bob a week's the rummiest start!
With your science and your books and your the'ries about
spooks,
Did you ever hear of looking in your heart?

I didn't mean your pocket, Mr., no:
I mean that having children and a wife,
With thirty bob on which to come and go,
680

Class struggle

Isn't dancing to the tabor and the fife:
When it doesn't make you drink, by Heaven! it makes
you think,
And notice curious items about life.

I step into my heart and there I meet
A god-almighty devil singing small,
Who would like to shout and whistle in the street,
And squelch the passers flat against the wall;
If the whole world was a cake he had the power to take,
He would take it, ask for more, and eat it all.

And I meet a sort of simploton beside,
The kind that life is always giving beans;
With thirty bob a week to keep a bride
He fell in love and married in his teens:
At thirty bob he stuck; but he knows it isn't luck:
He knows the seas are deeper than tureens.

And the god-almighty devil and the fool
That meet me in the High Street on the strike,
When I walk about my heart a-gathering wool,
Are my good and evil angels if you like.
And both of them together in every kind of weather
Ride me like a double-seated bike.

That's rough a bit and needs its meaning curled.
But I have a high old hot un in my mind—
A most engrugious notion of the world,
That leaves your lightning 'rithmetic behind:
I give it at a glance when I say "There ain't no chance,
Nor nothing of the lucky-lottery kind."

And it's this way I make it out to be:
No fathers, mothers, countries, climates—none;

Class struggle

Not Adam was responsible for me,
Nor society, nor systems, nary one:
A little sleeping seed, I woke—I did, indeed—
A million years before the blooming sun.

I woke because I thought the time had come;
Beyond my will there was no other cause;
And every where I found myself at home,
Because I chose to be the thing I was;
And in what ever shape of mollusc or of ape
I always went according to the laws.

I was the love that chose my mother out;
I joined two lives and from the union burst;
My weakness and my strength without a doubt
Are mine alone for ever from the first:
It's just the very same with a difference in the name
As "Thy will be done." You say it if you durst!

They say it daily up and down the land
As easy as you take a drink, it's true;
But the difficultest go to understand,
And the difficultest job a man can do,
Is to come it brave and meek with thirty bob a week,
And feel that that's the proper thing for you.

It's a naked child against a hungry wolf;
It's playing bowls upon a splitting wreck;
It's walking on a string across a gulf
With millstones fore-and-aft about your neck;
But the thing is daily done by many and many a one;
And we fall, face forward, fighting, on the deck.

JOHN DAVIDSON

THE TUNNEL
(from "The Bridge")

*To find the Western path
Right thro' the Gates of Wrath*

BLAKE

PERFORMANCES, assortments, résumés—
Up Times Square to Columbus Circle lights
Channel the congresses, nightly sessions,
Refractions of the thousand theaters, faces—
Mysterious kitchens . . . You shall search them all.
Some day by heart you'll learn each famous sight
And watch the curtain lift in hell's despite;
You'll find the garden in the third act dead,
Finger your knees—and wish yourself in bed
With tabloid crime-sheets perched in easy sight.

Then let you reach your hat
and go.
As usual, let you—also
walking down—exclaim
to twelve upward leaving
a subscription praise
for what time slays . . .

Or can't you quite make up your mind to ride;
A walk is better underneath the L for a brisk
Ten blocks or so before? But you find yourself
Preparing penguin flexions of the arms—
As usual you will meet the scuttle yawn:
The subway yawns the quickest promise home.

Class struggle

Be minimum then, to swim the hiving swarms
Out of the Square, the Circle burning bright—
Avoid the glass doors gyring at your right,
Where boxed alone a second, eyes take fright
—Quite unprepared rush naked back to light:
And down beside the turnstile press the coin
Into the slot. The gongs already rattle.

And so
of cities you bespeak
subways, rivered under streets
and rivers . . . In the car
the overtone of motion
underground, the monotone
of motion is the sound
of other faces, also underground—

“Let’s have a pencil Jimmy—living now
at Floral Park
Flatbush—on the fourth of July—
like a pigeon’s muddy dream—potatoes
to dig in the field—trav’lin’ the town too—
night after night—the Culver line—the
girls all shaping up—it used to be—”

Our tongues recant like beaten weather vanes.
This answer lives like verdigris, like hair
Beyond extinction, surcease of the bone;
And repetition freezes—“What

“what do you want? getting weak on the links?
fandaddle daddy don’t ask for change—IS THIS
FOURTEENTH? it’s half-past six she said—if
you don’t like my gate why did you
swing on it, why *didja*

swing on 'it
anyhow—

And somehow anyhow swing—

The phonographs of hades in the brain
Are tunnels that re-wind themselves, and love
A burnt match skating in a urinal—
Somewhere above Fourteenth TAKE THE EXPRESS
To brush some new presentiment of pain—

"But I want service in this office SERVICE
I said—after
the show she cried a little afterwards but—"

Whose head is swinging from the swollen strap?
Whose body smokes along the bitten rails,
Bursts from a smoldering bundle far behind
In back forks of the chasms of the brain—
Puffs from a riven stump far out behind
In interborough fissures of the mind . . . ?

And why do I often meet your visage here,
Your eyes like agate lanterns—on and on
Below the toothpaste and the dandruff ads?
—And did their riding eyes right through your side,
And did their eyes like unwashed platters ride?
And Death, aloft—gigantically down
Probing through you toward me, O Evermore!
And when they dragged your retching flesh,
Your trembling hands that night through Baltimore—
That last night on the ballot rounds, did you,
Shaking—did you deny the ticket, Poe?

Class struggle

For Gravesend Manor change at Chambers Street.
The platform hurries along to a dead stop.

The intent escalator lifts a serenade
Stilly
Of shoes, umbrellas, each eye attending its shoe, then
Bolting outright somewhere above where streets
Burst suddenly in rain . . . The gongs recur:
Elbows and levers, guard and hissing door.
Thunder is galvothemic here below . . . The car
Wheels off. The train rounds, bending to a scream,
Taking the final level for the dive
Under the river—
And somewhat emptier than before,
Demented, for a hitching second, humps; then
Lets go . . . Towards corners of the floor
Newspapers wing, revolve and wing.
Blank windows gargle signals through the roar.

And does the Daemon take you home, also,
Wop washerwoman, with the bandaged hair?
After the corridors are swept, the cuspidors—
The gaunt sky-barracks cleanly now, and bare,
O Genoese, do you bring mother-eyes and hands
Back home to children and to golden hair?

Daemon, demurring and eventful yawn!
Whose hideous laughter is the bellows mirth
—Or the muffled slaughter of a day in birth—
O cruelly to inoculate the brinking dawn
With antennae toward worlds that spark and sink—
To spoon us out more liquid than the dim
Locution of the eldest star, and pack
The conscience naveled in the plunging wind,
Umbilical to call—and straightway die!

Class struggle

O caught like pennies beneath soot and steam,
Kiss of our agony thou gatherest;
Condensed, thou takest all—shrill ganglia
Impassioned with some song we fail to keep.
And yet, like Lazarus, to feel the slope,
The sod and billow breaking—lifting ground,
—A sound of waters bending astride the sky
Unceasing with some word that will not die!

A tugboat, wheezing wreaths of steam,
Lunged past, with one galvanic blare stove up the river.
I counted the echoes assembling, one after one,
Searching, thumbing the midnight on the piers.
Lights, coasting left the oily tympanum of waters;
The blackness somewhere gouged glass on a sky.

And this thy harbor, O my City, I have driven under,
Tossed from the coil of ticking towers . . . Tomorrow,
And to be . . . Here by the River that is East—
Here at the waters' edge the hands drop memory;
Shadowless in that abyss they unaccounting lie.
How far away the star has pooled the sea—
Or shall the hands be drawn away, to die?

Kiss of our agony thou gatherest,
O Hand of Fire
gatherest—

HART CRANE

Class struggle

CONSIDER THIS AND IN
OUR TIME

CONSIDER this and in our time
As the hawk sees it or the helmeted airman;
The clouds rift suddenly—look there
At cigarette-end smoldering on a border
At the first garden party of the year.
Pass on, admire the view of the massif
Through plate-glass windows of the Sport Hotel;
Join there the insufficient units
Dangerous, easy, in furs, in uniform
And constellated at reserved tables
Supplied with feelings by an efficient band
Relayed elsewhere to farmers and their dogs
Sitting in kitchens in the stormy fens.

Long ago, supreme Antagonist,
More powerful than the great northern whale
Ancient and sorry at life's limiting defect,
In Cornwall, Mendip, or the Pennine moor
Your comments on the highborn mining-captains,
Found they no answer, made them wish to die
—Lie since in barrows out of harm.
You talk to your admirers every day
By silted harbors, derelict works,
In strangled orchards, and the silent comb
Where dogs have worried or a bird was shot.
Order the ill that they attack at once:
Visit the ports and, interrupting
The leisurely conversation in the bar
Within a stone's throw of the sunlit water,
Beckon your chosen out. Summon
Those handsome and diseased youngsters, those women

638

Class struggle

Your solitary agents in the country parishes;
And mobilize the powerful forces latent
In soils that make the farmer brutal
In the infected sinus, and the eyes of stoats.
Then, ready, start your rumor, soft
But horrifying in its capacity to disgust
Which, spreading magnified, shall come to be
A polar peril, a prodigious alarm,
Scattering the people, as torn-up paper
Rags and utensils in a sudden gust,
Seized with immeasurable neurotic dread.

Financier, leaving your little room
Where the money is made but not spent,
You'll need your typist and your boy no more;
The game is up for you and for the others,
Who, thinking, pace in slippers on the lawns
Of College Quad or Cathedral Close,
Who are born nurses, who live in shorts
Sleeping with people and playing fives.
Seekers after happiness, all who follow
The convolutions of your simple wish,
It is later than you think; nearer that day
Far other than that distant afternoon
Amid rustle of frocks and stamping feet
They gave the prizes to the ruined boys.
You cannot be away, then, no
No though you pack to leave within an hour,
Escaping humming down arterial roads:
The date was yours; the prey to fugues,
Irregular breathing and alternate ascendancies
After some haunted migratory years
To disintegrate on an instant in the explosion of mania
Or lapse for ever into a classic fatigue.

W. H. AUDEN
689

FOR A' THAT AND A' THAT

Is there, for honest poverty,
That hangs his head, and a' that?
The coward-slave, we pass him by,
We dare be poor for a' that!
For a' that, and a' that,
Our toils obscure, and a' that;
The rank is but the guinea stamp;
The man's the gowd for a' that.

What tho' on hamely fare we dine,
Wear hodden-gray, and a' that;
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine,
A man's a man for a' that.
For a' that, and a' that,
Their tinsel show, and a' that;
The honest man, tho' e'er sae poor,
Is King o' men for a' that.

Ye see yon birkie, ca'd a lord,
Wha struts, and stares, and a' that;
Tho' hundreds worship at his word,
He's but a coof for a' that:
For a' that, and a' that,
His riband, star, and a' that,
The man of independent mind,
He looks and laughs at a' that.

A prince can mak a belted knight,
A marquis, duke, and a' that;
But an honest man's aboon his might,
Guid faith he mauna fa' that!
For a' that, and a' that,

Class struggle

· Their dignities, and a' that,
The pith o' sense, and pride o' worth,
Are higher rank than a' that.

Then let us pray that come it may
As come it will for a' that,
That sence and worth o'er a' the earth,
Shall bear the gree and a' that;
For a' that, and a' that,
It's comin' yet for a' that,
That man to man, the world o'er,
Shall brithers be for a' that.

ROBERT BURNS

SPAIN

YESTERDAY all the past. The language of size
Spreading to China along the trade-routes; the diffusion
Of the counting-frame and the cromlech;
Yesterday the shadow-reckoning in the sunny climates.

Yesterday the assessment of insurance by cards,
The divination of water; yesterday the invention
Of cartwheels and clocks, the taming of
Horses; yesterday the bustling world of the navigators.

Yesterday the abolition of fairies and giants;
The fortress like a motionless eagle eyeing the valley,
The chapel built in the forest;
Yesterday the carving of angels and alarming gargoyles.

The trial of heretics among the columns of stone;
Yesterday the theological feuds in the taverns

Class struggle

And the miraculous cure at the fountain;
Yesterday the Sabbath of Witches. But to-day the
struggle.

Yesterday the installation of dynamos and turbines,
The construction of railways in the colonial desert;
Yesterday the classic lecture
On the origin of Mankind. But to-day the struggle.

Yesterday the belief in the absolute value of Greek;
The fall of the curtain upon the death of a hero;
Yesterday the prayer to the sunset
And the adoration of madmen. But to-day the struggle.

As the poet whispers, startled among the pines,
Or, where the loose waterfall sings, compact, or upright
On the crag by the leaning tower:
"O my vision. O send me the luck of the sailor."

And the investigator peers through his instruments
At the inhuman provinces, the virile bacillus
Or enormous Jupiter finished:
"But the lives of my friends. I inquire, I inquire."

And the poor in their fireless lodgings, dropping the sheets
Of the evening paper: "Our day is our loss, O show us
History the operator, the
Organizer, Time the refreshing river.

And the nations combine each cry, invoking the life
That shapes the individual belly and orders
The private nocturnal terror:
"Did you not found the city state of the sponge,

"Raise the vast military empires of the shark

Class struggle

And the tiger; establish the robin's plucky canton?
Intervenc. O descend as a dove or
A furious papa or a mild engineer: but descend."

And the life, if it answers at all, replies from the heart
And the eyes and the lungs, from the shops and squares
of the city:

"O no, I am not the Mover;
Not to-day, not to you. To you, I'm the

"Yes-man, the bar-companion, the easily-duped:
I am whatever you do; I am your vow to be
Good, your humorous story.
I am your business voice; I am your marriage.

"What's your proposal? To build the Just City? I will.
I agree. Or is it the suicide pact, the romantic
Death? Very well, I accept, for
I am your choice, your decision: yes, I am Spain."

Many have heard it on remote peninsulas,
On sleepy plains, in the aberrant fisherman's islands
In the corrupt heart of the city;
Have heard and migrated like gulls or the seeds of a
flower.

They clung like burrs to the long expresses that lurch
Through the unjust lands, through the night, through the
alpine tunnel;
They floated over the oceans;
They walked the passes: they came to present their lives.

On that arid square, that fragment nipped off from hot
Africa, soldered so crudely to inventive Europe,
On that tableland scored by rivers,
Our fever's menacing shapes are precise and alive.

Class struggle

To-morrow, perhaps the future: the research on fatigue
And the movements of packers; the gradual exploring of
all the

Octaves of radiation;

To-morrow the enlarging of consciousness by diet and
breathing.

To-morrow the rediscovery of romantic love;
The photographing of ravens; all the fun under

Liberty's masterful shadow;

To-morrow the hour of the pageant-master and the mu-
sician.

To-morrow, for the young, the poets exploding like
bombs,

The walks by the lake, the weeks of perfect communion;

To-morrow the bicycle races

Through the suburbs on summer evenings: but to-day
the struggle.

To-day the inevitable increase in the chances of death,
The conscious acceptance of guilt in the fact of murder;

To-day the expending of powers

On the flat ephemeral pamphlet and the boring meeting.

To-day the makeshift consolations: the shared cigarette,
The cards in the candlelit barn, and the scraping concert,

The masculine jokes; to-day the

Fumbled and unsatisfactory embrace before hurting.

The stars are dead; the animals will not look:

We are left alone with our day, and the time is short and

History to the defeated

May say Alas but cannot help or pardon.

W. H. AUDEN

II

A Little Treasury of Jabberwocky

JABBERWOCKY

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

"Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun
The frumious Bandersnatch!"

He took his vorpal sword in hand;
Long time the manxome foe he sought—
So rested he by the Tumtum tree,
And stood awhile in thought.

And, as in uffish thought he stood,
The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
Came whiffling through the tulgey wood,
And burbled as it came!

One, two! One, two! And through and through
The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!
He left it dead, and with its head
He went galumphing back.

"And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?
Come to my arms, my beamish boy!
O frabjous day! Callooh, Callay!"
He chortled in his joy.

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:

A little treasury

All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

LEWIS CARROLL

TO THE TERRESTRIAL GLOBE

by a Miserable Wretch

ROLL on, thou ball, roll on!
Through pathless realms of Space
Roll on!
What though I'm in a sorry case?
What though I cannot meet my bills?
What though I suffer toothache's ills?
What though I swallow countless pills?
Never *you* mind!
Roll on!

Roll on, thou ball, roll on!
Through seas of inky air
Roll on!
It's true I have no shirts to wear;
It's true my butcher's bill is due;
It's true my prospects all look blue—
But don't let that unsettle you:
Never *you* mind!
Roll on!

[*It rolls on.*]

SIR W. S. GILBERT

FOGGY, FOGGY DEW

WHEN I was a bachelor, I lived by myself
And I worked at the weaver's trade;
The only, only thing that I ever did wrong
Was to woo a fair young maid.
I wooed her in the winter time,
And in the summer too;
And the only, only thing that I ever did wrong
Was to keep her from the foggy, foggy dew.

One night she came to my bedside
Where I lay fast asleep;
She laid her head upon my bed,
And then began to weep.
She sighed, she cried, she damn near died,
She said—"What shall I do?"—
So I hauled her into bed and I covered up her head,
Just to save her from the foggy, foggy dew.

Oh, I am a bachelor, I live with my son,
And we work at the weaver's trade;
And every, every time that I look into his eyes,
He reminds me of that maid.
He reminds me of the winter time,
And of the summer too;
And the many, many times that I held her in my arms,
Just to keep her from the foggy, foggy dew.

ANON

THERE WAS A NAUGHTY BOY

(From a letter to Fanny Keats)

THERE was a naughty Boy,
And a naughty Boy was he,
He ran away to Scotland
The people for to see—

Then he found
That the ground
Was as hard,
That a yard
Was as long,
That a song
Was as merry,
That a cherry
Was as red—
That lead
Was as weighty,
That fourscore
Was as eighty,
That a door
Was as wooden
As in England—

So he stood in his shoes
And he wonder'd,
He wonder'd,
He stood in his shoes
And he wonder'd.

JOHN KEATS

ELEGY ON THE DEATH
OF A MAD DOG

Good people all, of every sort,
Give ear unto my song;
And if you find it wond'rous short,
It cannot hold you long.

In Islington there was a man,
Of whom the world might say,
That still a godly race he ran,
Whene'er he went to pray.

A kind and gentle heart he had,
To comfort friends and foes;
The naked every day he clad,
When he put on his clothes.

And in that town a dog was found,
As many dogs there be,
Both mongrel, puppy, whelp, and hound,
And curs of low degree.

This dog and man at first were friends;
But when a pique began,
The dog, to gain some private ends,
Went mad and bit the man.

Around from all the neighboring streets
The wond'ring neighbors ran,
And swore the dog had lost its wits,
To bite so good a man.

The wound it seem'd both sore and sad
To every Christian eye;

A little treasury

And while they swore the dog was mad,
They swore the man would die.

But soon a wonder came to light,
That showed the rogues they lied:
The man recover'd of the bite,
The dog it was that died.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

THE POBBLE WHO HAS
NO TOES

THE Pobble who has no toes
Had once as many as we;
When they said, 'Some day you may lose them all';—
He replied,—'Fish fiddle de-deel'
And his Aunt Jobiska made him drink,
Lavender water tinged with pink,
For she said, 'The World in general knows
There's nothing so good for a Pobble's toes!'

The Pobble who has no toes,
Swam across the Bristol Channel;
But before he set out he wrapped his nose,
In a piece of scarlet flannel.
For his Aunt Jobiska said, 'No harm
'Can come to his toes if his nose is warm;
'And it's perfectly known that a Pobble's toes
'Are safe,—provided he minds his nose.'

The Pobble swam fast and well,
And when boats or ships came near him

of Jabberwocky

He tinkledy-binkledy-winkled a bell,
So that all the world could hear him.
And all the Sailors and Admirals cried,
When they saw him nearing the further side,—
'He has gone to fish, for his Aunt Jobiska's
'Runcible Cat with crimson whiskers!'

But before he touched the shore,
The shore of the Bristol Channel,
A sea-green Porpoise carried away
His wrapper of scarlet flannel.
And when he came to observe his feet,
Formerly garnished with toes so neat,
His face at once became forlorn
On perceiving that all his toes were gone!

And nobody ever knew
From that dark day to the present,
Whoso had taken the Pobble's toes,
In a manner so far from pleasant.
Whether the shrimps or crawfish gray,
Or crafty Mermaids stole them away—
Nobody knew; and nobody knows
How the Pobble was robbed of his twice five toes!

The Pobble who has no toes
Was placed in a friendly Bark,
And they rowed him back, and carried him up,
To his Aunt Jobiska's Park.
And she made him a feast at his earnest wish
Of eggs and buttercups fried with fish;—
And she said,—'It's a fact the whole world knows,
'That Pobbles are happier without their toes.'

FATHER WILLIAM

(Parody of a poem by Robert Southey)

"You are old, Father William," the young man said,
"And your hair has become very white;
And yet you incessantly stand on your head—
Do you think, at your age, it is right?"

"In my youth," Father William replied to his son,
"I feared it might injure the brain;
But, now that I'm perfectly sure I have none,
Why, I do it again and again."

"You are old," said the youth, "as I mentioned before,
And have grown most uncommonly fat;
Yet you turned a back-somersault in at the door—
Pray, what is the reason of that?"

"In my youth," said the sage, as he shook his gray locks,
"I kept all my limbs very supple
By the use of this ointment—one shilling a box—
Allow me to sell you a couple?"

"You are old," said the youth, "and your jaws are too
weak
For anything tougher than suet;
Yet you finished the goose, with the bones and the beak—
Pray, how did you manage to do it?"

"In my youth," said his father, "I took to the law,
And argued each case with my wife;
And the muscular strength which it gave to my jaw,
Has lasted the rest of my life."

of Jabberwocky

"You are old," said the youth, "one would hardly suppose
That your eye was as steady as ever;
Yet you balanced an eel on the end of your nose—
What made you so awfully clever?"

"I have answered three questions, and that is enough,"
Said his father; "don't give yourself airs!
Do you think I can listen all day to such stuff?
Be off, or I'll kick you downstairs."

LEWIS CARROLL

THE LATEST DECALOGUE

THOU shalt have one God only; who
Would be at the expense of two?
No graven images may be
Worshipped, except the currency:
Swear not at all; for, for thy curse .
Thine enemy is none the worse:
At church on Sunday to attend
Will serve to keep the world thy friend:
Honour thy parents; that is, all
From whom advancement may befall:
Thou shalt not kill; but need'st not strive
Officiously to keep alive:
Do not adultery commit;
Advantage rarely comes of it:
Thou shalt not steal; an empty feat,
When it's so lucrative to cheat:
Bear not false witness; let the lie
Have time on its own wings to fly:
Thou shalt not covet, but tradition
Approves all forms of competition.

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH

THE WALRUS AND THE CARPENTER

THE sun was shining on the sea,
Shining with all his might:
He did his very best to make
The billows smooth and bright—
And this was odd, because it was
The middle of the night.

The moon was shining sulkily,
Because she thought the sun
Had got no business to be there
After the day was done—
“It’s very rude of him,” she said,
“To come and spoil the fun!”

• The sea was wet as wet could be,
The sands were dry as dry.
You could not see a cloud, because
No cloud was in the sky:
No birds were flying overhead—
There were no birds to fly.

The Walrus and the Carpenter
Were walking close at hand:
They wept like anything to see
Such quantities of sand:
“If this were only cleared away,”
They said, “it *would* be grand!”

“If seven maids with seven mops
Swept it for half a year,
Do you suppose,” the Walrus said,

of Jabberwocky

"That they could get it clear?"
"I doubt it," said the Carpenter,
And shed a bitter tear.

"O oysters, come and walk with us!"
The Walrus did beseech.
"A pleasant walk, a pleasant talk,
Along the briny beach:
We cannot do with more than four,
To give a hand to each."

The eldest Oyster looked at him,
But never a word he said:
The eldest Oyster winked his eye,
And shook his heavy head—
Meaning to say he did not choose
To leave the oyster-bed.

But four young Oysters hurried up,
All eager for the treat:
Their coats were brushed, their faces washed,
Their shoes were clean and neat—
And this was odd, because, you know,
They hadn't any feet.

Four other Oysters followed them,
And yet another four;
And thick and fast they came at last,
And more, and more, and more—
All hopping through the frothy waves,
And scrambling to the shore.

The Walrus and the Carpenter
Walked on a mile or so,
And then they rested on a rock

A little treasury

Conveniently low:
And all the little Oysters stood
And waited in a row.

"The time has come," the Walrus said,
"To talk of many things:
Of shoes—and ships—and sealing wax—
Of cabbages—and kings—
And why the sea is boiling hot—
And whether pigs have wings."

"But wait a bit," the Oysters cried,
"Before we have our chat;
For some of us are out of breath,
And all of us are fat!"
"No hurry!" said the Carpenter.
They thanked him much for that.

"A loaf of bread," the Walrus said,
"Is what we chiefly need:
Pepper and vinegar besides
Are very good indeed—
Now, if you're ready, Oysters dear,
We can begin to feed."

"But not on us!" the Oysters cried,
Turning a little blue.
"After such kindness, that would be
A dismal thing to do!"
"The night is fine," the Walrus said.
"Do you admire the view?"

"It was so kind of you to come!
And you are very nice!"
The Carpenter said nothing but

of Jabberwocky

"Cut us another slice.
I wish you were not quite so deaf—
I've had to ask you twice!"

"It seems a shame," the Walrus said,
"To play them such a trick.
After we've brought them out so far,
And made them trot so quick!"
The Carpenter said nothing but
"The butter's spread too thick!"

"I weep for you," the Walrus said:
"I deeply sympathize."
With sobs and tears he sorted out
Those of the largest size,
Holding his pocket-handkerchief
Before his streaming eyes.

"O Oysters," said the Carpenter,
"You've had a pleasant run!
Shall we be trotting home again?"
But answer came there none—
And this was scarcely odd, because
They'd eaten every one.

LEWIS CARROLL

MY SHADOW

I HAVE a little shadow that goes in and out with me,
And what can be the use of him is more than I can see.
He is very, very like me, from the heels up to the head;
And I see him jump before me, when I jump into bed.

A little treasury

The funniest thing about him is the way he likes to grow—
Not at all like proper children, which is always very slow;
For he sometimes shoots up taller, like an india-rubber
ball,
And he sometimes gets so little that there's none of him
at all.

He hasn't got a notion of how children ought to play,
And can only make a fool of me in every sort of way.
He stays so close beside me, he's a coward you can see;
I'd think shame to stick to nursie as that shadow sticks to
me!

One morning, very early, before the sun was up,
I rose and found the shining dew on every buttercup;
But my lazy little shadow, like an arrant sleepy head,
Had stayed at home behind me and was fast asleep in
bed.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

From SPECTATOR AB EXTRA

As I sat at the Café I said to myself,
They may talk as they please about what they call pelf,
They may sneer as they like about eating and drinking,
But help it I cannot, I cannot help thinking
How pleasant it is to have money, heigh-ho!
How pleasant it is to have money.

I sit at my table *en grand seigneur*,
And when I have done, throw a crust to the poor;
Not only the pleasure itself of good living,

of Jabberwocky

But also the pleasure of now and then giving:
So pleasant it is to have money, heigh-ho!
So pleasant it is to have money.

They may talk as they please about what they call pelf,
And how one ought never to think of one's self,
How pleasures of thought surpass eating and drinking,—
My pleasure of thought is the pleasure of thinking
How pleasant it is to have money, heigh-ho!
How pleasant it is to have money.

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH

LONDON BELLS

GAY go up, and gay go down,
To ring the bells of London town.

Bull's eyes and targets,
Say the bells of St. Marg'ret's.

Brickbats and tiles,
Say the bells of St. Giles'.

Halfpence and farthings
Say the bells of St. Martin's.

Oranges and lemons,
Say the bells of St. Clement's.

Pancakes and fritters,
Say the bells of St. Peter's.

A little treasury

Two sticks and an apple,
Say the bells at Whitechapel.

Old Father Baldpate,
Say the slow bells at Aldgate.

Maids in white aprons,
Say the bells of St. Cath'rine's.

Pokers and tongs,
Say the bells at St. John's.

Kettles and pans,
Say the bells at St. Ann's.

You owe me ten shillings,
Say the bolls at St. Helen's.

When will you pay me?
Say the bells at Old Bailey.

When I grow rich,
Say the bells at Fleetditch.

When will that be?
Say the bells at Stepney.

I am sure I don't know,
Says the great bell at Bow.

When I am old,
Say the bells at St. Paul's.

Here comes a candle to light you to bed,
And here comes a chopper to chop off your head.

ANON

THE PESSIMIST

Nothing to do but work,
Nothing to eat but food,
Nothing to wear but clothes,
To keep one from going nude.

Nothing to breathe but air,
Quick as a flash 'tis gone;
Nowhere to fall but off,
Nowhere to stand but on.

Nothing to comb but hair,
Nowhere to sleep but in bed,
Nothing to weep but tears,
Nothing to bury but dead.

Nothing to sing but songs,
Ah, well, alas! alack!
Nowhere to go but out,
Nowhere to come but back.

Nothing to see but sights,
Nothing to quench but thirst,
Nothing to have but what we've got
Thus through life we are cursed.

Nothing to strike but a gait;
Everything moves that goes.
Nothing at all but common sense
Can ever withstand these woes.

BEN KING

A SONNET ON A MONKEY

O LOVELY O most charming pug
Thy graceful air and heavenly mug
The beauties of his mind do shine
And every bit is shaped so fine
Your very tail is most divine
Your teeth is whiter than the snow
You are a great buck and a bow
Your eyes are of so fine a shape
More like a christian's than an ape
His cheeks is like the rose's blume
Your hair is like the raven's plume
His nose's cast is of the roman
He is a very pretty woman
I could not get a rhyme for roman
And was obliged to call him woman.

MARJORY FLEMING
(Aged 8)

THREE MEN OF GOTHAM

SEAMEN threel What men be ye?
Gotham's three wise men we be.
Whither in your bowl so free?
To rake the moon from out the sea.
The bowl goes trim. The moon doth shine.
And our ballast is old wine.—
And your ballast is old wine.

Who art thou, so fast adrift?
I am he they call Old Care.

of Jabberwocky

Hére on board we will thee lift,
No: I may not enter there,
Wherefore so? 'Tis Jove's decree,
In a bowl Care may not be.—
In a bowl Care may not be.

Fear ye not the waves that roll?
No: in charmed bowl we swim.
What the charm that floats the bowl?
Water may not pass the brim.
The bowl goes trim. The moon doth shine.
And our ballast is old wine.—
And your ballast is old wine.

THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK

THE MODERN HIAWATHA

WHEN he killed the Mudjokivis,
Of the skin he made him mittens,
Made them with the fur side inside,
Made them with the skin side outside,
He, to get the warm side inside,
Put the inside skin side outside;
He, to get the cold side outside,
Put the warm side fur side inside.
• That's why he put fur side inside,
Why he put the skin side outside,
Why he turned them inside outside.

THE LOGICAL VEGETARIAN

You will find me drinking rum,
Like a sailor in a slum,
You will find me drinking beer like a Bavarian,
You will find me drinking gin
In the lowest kind of inn,
Because I am a rigid Vegetarian.

So I cleared the inn of wine,
And I tried to climb the sign,
And I tried to hail the constable as 'Marion'.
But he said I couldn't speak
And he bowled me to the Beak
Because I was a happy Vegetarian.

Oh, I knew a Doctor Gluck,
And his nose it had a hook,
And his attitudes were anything but Aryan;
So I gave him all the pork
That I had, upon a fork;
Because I am myself a Vegetarian.

I am silent in the club,
I am silent in the pub,
I am silent on a bally peak in Darien;
For I stuff away for life
Shoving peas in with a knife,
Because I am at heart a Vegetarian. •

No more the milk of cows
Shall pollute my private house
Than the milk of the wild mares of the Barbarian;

I will stick to port and sherry,
For they are so very, very,
So very, very, very Vegetarian.

G. K. CHESTERTON

POOR BUT HONEST

SHE was poor, but she was honest,
Victim of the squire's whim:
First he loved her, then he left her,
And she lost her honest name.

Then she ran away to London,
For to hide her grief and shame;
There she met another squire,
And she lost her name again.

See her riding in her carriage,
In the Park and all so gay:
All the nibs and nobby persons
Come to pass the time of day.

See the little old-world village
Where her aged parents live,
Drinking the champagne she sends them;
But they never can forgive.

In the rich man's arms she flutters,
Like a bird with broken wing:
First he loved her, then he left her,
And she hasn't got a ring.

A little treasury

See him in the splendid mansion,
Entertaining with the best,
While the girl that he has ruined,
Entertains a sordid guest.

See him in the House of Commons,
Making laws to put down crime,
While the victim of his passions
Trails her way through mud and slime.

Standing on the bridge at midnight,
She says: 'Farewell, blighted Love.'
There's a scream, a splash—Good Heavens!
What is she a-doing off?

Then they drag her from the river,
Water from her clothes they wrang,
For they thought that she was drowned;
But the corpse got up and sang:

'It's the same the whole world over;
It's the poor that gets the blame,
It's the rich that get the pleasure.
Isn't it a blooming shame?'

ANON

BIBLE STORIES

CHORUS:

*Young folks, old folks, everybody come,
Come along to Sunday School and make yourselves to
home;
Please check your chewing gum and razors at the door,
And you'll hear some Bible stories that you never heard
before.*

The world was made in six days, finished on the 'leventh;
Should of been done in time for Sunday on the seventh.
But the carpenters went on a strike, the masons wouldn't
work,
The Lord got disgusted an' filled it full of dirt.
Young folks, old folks, etc.

Then he made the sea and stuck in it a whale,
Then he made a raccoon with rings around his tail,
Then all the other animals one by one,
And he stuck them up against a fence for to dry out in
the sun.
Young folks, old folks, etc.

The Lord made Satan, Satan made sin,
The Lord made a cubbyhole to put Satin in,
But Satan didn't like it, said he wouldn't stay
And he's acted like the Devil ever since that day.
Young folks, old folks, etc.

Adam was the first man, Eve was his spouse,
They both lived together in a little bitty house;
All went well 'til the first baby came.

A little treasury

Then they moved to the country and started raisin' Cain,
Young folks, old folks, etc.

Along came Noah, stumbled in the dark,
Picked up an axe and built himself an ark;
Along came the animals two by two
From the little red ant to the big kangaroo.
Young folks, old folks, etc.

Along came Goliath looking for a fuss;
Along came Davie, plucky little cuss,
Made up his mind not to bite the dust,
Pulled out his sling shot and caved in his crust.
Young folks, old folks, etc.

Now Ahab got him a wife by the name of Jezebel,
She was too bossy and the time came when she fell,
Ahab missed her in her fancy pantsy togs
So the people came and told him she's gone to the dogs.
Young folks, old folks, etc.

Now Samson was a husky guy as everyone should know,
He used to lift five hundred pounds and always steal the
show,
One week the bill was rotten, the actors had a souse
But the strongman act of Samson's just brought down the
house.
Young folks, old folks, etc.

Along came Jonah, looking for a sail,
The sailors didn't like him and threw him in a whale
Jonah was so nervous he walked all about
But the whale couldn't stomach it and spit him right out.
Young folks, old folks, etc.

ANON

I SAW A PEACOCK

I SAW a peacock with a fiery tail
I saw a blazing comet drop down hail
I saw a cloud with ivy circled round
I saw a sturdy oak creep on the ground
I saw a pismire swallow up a whale
I saw a raging sea brim full of ale
I saw a Venice glass sixteen foot deep
I saw a well full of men's tears that weep
I saw their eyes all in a flame of fire
I saw a house as big as the moon and higher
I saw the sun oven in the midst of night
I saw the Man that saw this wondrous sight.

ANON

WHAT ARE FOLKS MADE OF

WHAT are little boys made of, made of?
What are little boys made of?
Piggins and pails and little puppy tails,
That's what little boys are made of.

What are little girls made of? etc.
Sugar and spice and all things nice
And that's what little girls are made of.

What's young men made of? etc.
Thorns and briars, they're all bad liars,
And that's what young men are made of.

A little treasury

What's young women made of? etc.
Rings and jings and all fine things
And that's what young women are made of.

What's old men made of? etc.
Whiskey and brandy and sugar and candy,
And that's what old men are made of.

ANON

A GENTLE ECHO ON WOMAN

(In the Doric Manner)

SHEPHERD: Echo, I ween, will in the wood reply,
And quaintly answer questions: shall I try?

ECHO: Try.

What must we do our passion to express?

Press.

How shall I please her, who ne'er loved before?

Be Fore.

What most moves women when we them address?

A dress.

Say, what can keep her chaste whom I adore?

A door.

If music softens rocks, love tunes my lyre.

Liar.

Then teach me, Echo, how shall I come by her?

Buy her.

When bought, no question I shall be her dear?

Her deer.

But deer have horns: how must I keep her under?

Keep her under.

of Jabberwocky

But what can glad me when she's laid on bier?
Beor.
What must I do when women will be kind?
Be kind.
What must I do when women will be cross?
Be cross.
Lord, what is she that can so turn and wind?
Wind.
If she be wind, what stills her when she blows?
Blows.
But if she bang again, still should I bang her?
Bang her.
Is there no way to moderate her anger?
Hang her.
Thanks, gentle Echo! right thy answers tell
What woman is and how to guard her well.
Guard her well.

JONATHAN SWIFT

FRANKIE AND JOHNNY

FRANKIE and Johnny were lovers.
O my Gawd how they did love!
They swore to be true to each other,
As true as the stars above.
He was her man but he done her wrong.

Frankie and Johnny went walking,
Johnny in a brand new suit.
Frankie went walking with Johnny,
Said: "O Gawd don't my Johnny look cute."
He was her man but he done her wrong.

A little treasury

Frankie went down to Memphis,
Went on the morning train,
Paid a hundred dollars,
Bought Johnny a watch and chain.
He was her man but he done her wrong.

Frankie lived in a crib-house,
Crib-house with only two doors,
Gave her money to Johnny,
He spent it on those parlour whores.
He was her man but he done her wrong.

Frankie went down to the hock-shop,
Went for a bucket of beer,
Said: "O Mr. Bartender
Has my loving Johnny been here?
He is my man but he's doing me wrong."

"I don't want to make you no trouble,
I don't want to tell you no lie,
But I saw Johnny an hour ago
With a girl named Nelly Bly.
He is your man but he's doing you wrong."

Frankie went down to the hotel.
She didn't go there for fun,
'Cause underneath her kimono
She toted a 44 gun.
He was her man but he done her wrong.

Frankie went down to the hotel.
She rang the front-door bell,
Said: "Stand back all you chippies
Or I'll blow you all to hell.
I want my man for he's doing me wrong."

of Jubberwocky

Frankie looked in through the key-hole
And there before her eye
She saw her Johnny on the sofa
A-loving up Nelly Bly.
He was her man; he was doing her wrong.

Frankie threw back her kimono,
Took out a big 44,
Root-a-toot-toot, three times she shoot
Right through that hard-ware door.
He was her man but was doing her wrong.

Johnny grabbed up his Stetson,
Said, "O my Gawd Frankie don't shoot."
But Frankie pulled hard on the trigger
And the gun went root-a-toot-toot.
She shot her man who was doing her wrong.

"Roll me over easy,
Roll me over slow,
Roll me over on my right side
'Cause my left side hurts me so.
I was her man but I done her wrong."

Johnny he was a gambler,
He gambled for the gain;
The very last words he ever said
Werc—"High-low Jack and the game."
He was her man but he done her wrong.

"Bring out your rubber-tired buggy,
Bring out your rubber-tired hack;
I'll take my Johnny to the graveyard
But I won't bring him back.
He was my man but he done me wrong.

A little treasury

Lock me in that dungeon,
Lock me in that cell,
Lock me where the north-east wind
Blows from the corner of Hell.
I shot my man 'cause he done me wrong."

Frankie went down to the Madame,
She went down on her knees.
"Forgive me, Mrs. Halcombe,
Forgive me if you please
For shooting my man 'cause he done me wrong."

"Forgive you Frankie darling,
Forgive you I never can,
Forgive you Frankie darling
For shooting your only man,
For he was your man though he done you wrong."

It was not murder in the first degree,
It was not murder in the third.
A woman simply shot her man
As a hunter drops a bird.
She shot her man 'cause he done her wrong.

Frankie said to the Sheriff,
"What do you think they'll do?"
The Sheriff said to Frankie,
"It's the electric chair for you.
You shot your man 'cause he done you wrong."

Frankie sat in the jail-house,
Had no electric fan,
Told her little sister:
"Don't you marry no sporting man.
I had a man but he done me wrong."

Frankie heard a runbling,
Away down in the ground;
Maybe it was little Johnny
Where she had shot him down.
He was her man, but he done her wrong.

Once more I saw Frankie,
She was sitting in the chair
Waiting for to go and meet her God
With the sweat dripping out of her hair.
He was her man, but he done her wrong.

This story has no moral,
This story has no end,
This story only goes to show
That there ain't no good in men.
He was her man but he done her wrong.

ANON

LIMERICKS

- I A WONDERFUL bird is the pelican,
His mouth can hold more than his belican,
He can take in his beak
Enough food for a week—
I'm damned if I know how the helican.
- II THERE was a young man of St. Bees
Who was stung on the arm by a wasp;
When they said, "Does it hurt?"
He replied, "No it doesn't:
It's a good job it wasn't a hornet."

A little treasury

- III THERE was a young lady of Spain
Who was dreadfully sick in a train,
Not once, but again,
And again and again,
And again and again and again.
- IV THERE was an old party of Lyme
Who married three wives at one time.
When asked: "Why the third?"
He replied: "One's absurd,
And bigamy, sir, is a crime."
- V A BEAUTIFUL lady named Psyche
Is loved by a fellow named Yche.
One thing about Ych
The lady can't lych
Is his beard, which is dreadfully spyche.
- VI AN epicure, dining at Crewe,
Found quite a large mouse in his stew.
Said the waiter, "Don't shout,
And wave it about,
Or the rest will be wanting one, too!"
- VII THERE was a young fellow named Hall,
Who fell in the spring in the fall;
'Twould have been a sad thing
If he'd died in the spring,
But he didn't—he died in the fall.
- VIII A FLEA and a fly in a flue
Were imprisoned, so what could they do?
Said the fly, "Let us flee,"
Said the flea, "Let us fly,"
So they flew through a flaw in the flue.

of Jabberwocky

- IX THERE was an old man from Peru
Who dreamed he was eating his shoe,
He woke in a fright
In the middle of the night
And found it was perfectly true.
- X THERE once was a man from Nantucket
Who kept all his cash in a bucket;
But his daughter, named Nan,
Ran away with a man,
And as for the bucket, Nantucket.
- XI BUT he followed the pair to Pawtucket—
The man and the girl with the bucket;
And he said to the man
He was welcome to Nan,
But as for the bucket, Pawtucket.

ANON

- XII THERE was a Young Lady of Portugall
Whose ideas were excessively nautical:
She climbed up a tree
To examine the sea,
But declared she would never leave Portugal.

EDWARD LEAR

- XIII THERE was an Old Man who said, "Hush!
I perceive a young bird in this bush!"
When they said, "Is it small?"
He replied, "Not at all!
It is four times as big as the bush."

EDWARD LEAR

A little treasury

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And as for the bucket, Nantucket.
- XI BUT he followed the pair to Pawtucket—
The man and the girl with the bucket;
And he said to the man
He was welcome to Nan,
But as for the bucket, Pawtucket.

ANON

- XII THERE was a Young Lady of Portugal
Whose ideas were excessively nautical;
She climbed up a tree
To examine the sea,
But declared she would never leave Portugal.

EDWARD LEAR

- XIII THERE was an Old Man who said, "Hush!
I perceive a young bird in this bush!"
When they said, "Is it small?"
He replied, "Not at all!
It is four times as big as the bush."

EDWARD LEAR

A little treasury

MIKE O'DAY

THIS is the grave of Mike O'Day
Who died maintaining his right of way.
His right was clear, his will was strong,
But he's just as dead as if he'd been wrong.

ANON

A DENTIST

STRANGER! Approach this spot with gravity!
John Brown is filling his last cavity.

ANON

THE RAIN

THE rain it raineth every day,
Upon the just and unjust fellow,
But more upon the just, because
The unjust hath the just's umbrella.

ANON

SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN

SIR Christopher Wren
Said, "I am going to dine with some men.
If anybody calls
Say I am designing St. Paul's."

ANON

WINTER IS GONE

WINTER is gone, and spring is over,
The cuckoo-flowers grow mauver and mauver.

ALFRED AUSTIN

of Jabberwocky

HER LIPS

HER lips they are redder than coral
That under the ocean grows;
She is sweet, she is fair, she is moral,
My beautiful Georgian rose!

ANON

I USED TO LOVE MY GARDEN

I USED to love my garden
But now my love is dead
For I found a bachelor's button
In black-eyed Susan's bed.

C. P. SAWYER

A TRUE MAID

No, no; for my virginity,
When I lose that, says Rose, I'll die:
Behind the elms, last night, cried Dick,
Rose, were you not extremely sick?

MATTHEW PRIOR

EPIGRAM

• To John I owed great obligation;
But John unhappily thought fit
To publish it to all the nation:

DOCTOR FELL

I do not love thee, Doctor Fell,
The reason why I cannot tell,
But this one thing I know full well:
I do not love thee, Doctor Fell.

THOMAS BROWN

WASTE

I HAD written to Aunt Maud,
Who was on a trip abroad,
When I heard she'd died of cramp
Just too late to save the stamp.

HARRY GRAHAM

MR. JONES

"THERE's been an accident," they said,
"Your servant's cut in half; he's dead!"
"Indeed!" said Mr. Jones, "and please,
Send me the half that's got my keys."

HARRY GRAHAM .

THE FIVE REASONS

IF all be true that I do think,
There are *Five Reasons* we should drink;
Good Wine, a Friend, or being Dry,
Or lest we should be by and by;
Or any other Reason why.

HENRY ALDRICH

of Jabbertwocky

I STOOD ON THE BRIDGE

I STOOD on the bridge at midnight
As the clock struck on the town,
I stood on the bridge at midnight
Because I couldn't sit down.

ANON

DASH BACK

DASH back that ocean with a pier,
Strow yonder mountain flat,
A railway here, a tunnel there,
Mix me this zone with that.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

A JOKE VERSIFIED

"COME, come," said Tom's father, "at your time of life,
There's no longer excuse for thus playing the rake—
It is time you should think, boy, of taking a wife."—
"Why so it is father,—whose wife shall I take?"

THOMAS MOORE

ON A CLERGYMAN'S HORSE BITING HIM

THE steed bit his master;
How came this to pass?
He heard the good pastor
Cry, "All flesh is grass."

ANON
733

EPIGRAM

SIR, I admit your general rule,
That every poet is a fool,
But you yourself may serve to show it,
That every fool is not a poet.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

AT ABERDEEN

HERE lie I, Martin Elginbrodde:
Have mercy on my soul, Lord God,
As I wad do, were I Lord God,
And ye were Martin Elginbrodde.

ANON

ON DR. ISAAC LETSOME

WHEN people's ill they comes to I,
I physics, bleeds, and sweats 'em,
Sometimes they live, sometimes they die;
What's that to I? I Letsome.

ANON

ENGRAVED ON THE COLLAR OF A DOG, WHICH I GAVE TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

I AM his Highness' dog at Kew;
Pray tell me, sir, whose dog are you?

ALEXANDER POPE

of Jabberwocky

THE INDIAN

THERE once were some people called Sioux
Who spent all their time making shioux
Which they coloured in various hioux;
Don't think that they made them to ioux
Oh! no, they just sold them for bioux.

ANON

MARY ANN

MARY ANN has gone to rest,
Safe at last on Abraham's breast,
Which may be nuts for Mary Ann,
But is certainly rough on Abraham.

ANON

THE FLEAS

GREAT fleas have little fleas upon their backs to bite 'em,
And little fleas have lesser fleas and so ad infinitum.
And the great fleas themselves, in turn, have greater fleas
to go on;
While these again have greater still, and greater still, and
so on.

A. DE MORGAN

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

WHEN Sir Joshua Reynolds died
All Nature was degraded;
The King dropp'd a tear into the Queen's Ear,
And all his Pictures Faded.

WILLIAM BLAKE
735

THE DEATH OF POLYBIUS JUBB

HE died in attempting to swallow,
Which proves that, though fat, he was hollow—
For in gasping for space
He swallowed his face,
And hadn't the courage to follow.

ROY CAMPBELL

FIGHT

HE that is in the battle slain
Will never rise to fight again;
But he that fights and runs away
Will live to fight another day.

ANON

UP IN THE NORTH

UP in the North, a long way off,
The donkey's got the whooping-cough.

ANON

I HAD A 'LITTLE NUT-TREE

I HAD a little nut-tree, nothing would it bear
But a golden nutmeg and a silver pear;
The King of Spain's daughter came to visit me,
And all for the sake of my little nut-tree.
I skipp'd over water, I danced over sea,
And all the birds in the air couldn't catch me.

ANON

of Jabberwocky

THERE WAS A LITTLE GIRL

THERE was a little girl,
And she had a little curl
Right in the middle of her forehead.
When she was good
She was very, very good,
And when she was bad she was horrid.

ANON

MONDAY'S CHILD

MONDAY'S child is fair of face,
TUESDAY'S child is full of grace,
WEDNESDAY'S child is full of woe,
THURSDAY'S child has far to go,
FRIDAY'S child is loving and giving,
SATURDAY'S child works hard for its living,
And a child that is born on the Sabbath day
Is fair and wise and good and gay.

ANON

BURLESQUE OF LOPE DE VEGA

If the man who turnips cries,
Cry not when his father dies,
'Tis a proof that he had rather
Have a turnip than his father.

SAMUEL JOHNSON

TREASON

TREASON doth never prosper—What's the reason?
If it doth prosper, none dare call it treason.

SIR JOHN HARINGTON

THE MAN IN THE WILDERNESS

THE man in the wilderness asked of me,
How many strawberries grow in the sea?
I answered him as I thought good,
As many red herrings as grow in the wood.

ANON

ALL THINGS HAVE SAVOUR

ALL things have savour, though some very small,
Nay, a box on the ear hath no smell at all.

ANON

THE MAN OF THESSALY

THERE was a Man of Thessaly,
And he was wondrous wise:
He jumped into a briar hedge
And scratched out both his eyes.
But when he saw his eyes were out,
With all his might and main
He jumped into another hedge
And scratched them in again.

ANON

HEY DIDDLE DIDDLE

SEEK hey diddle diddle, the cat and the fiddle,
The cow jumped over the moon;
The little dog laughed to see such craft,
And the dish ran away with the spoon.

ANON

THE SUICIDE'S GRAVE

ON a tree by a river a little tom-tit
Sang "Willow, titwillow, titwillow!"
And I said to him, "Dicky-bird, why do you sit
Singing 'Willow, titwillow, titwillow'?"
Is it a weakness of intellect, birdie?" I cried,
"Or a rather tough worm in your little inside?"
With a shake of his poor little head he replied,
"Oh, willow, titwillow, titwillow!"

He slapped at his chest, as he sat on that bough,
Singing "Willow, titwillow, titwillow!"
And a cold perspiration bespangled his brow,
Oh, willow, titwillow, titwillow!
He sobbed and he sighed, and a gurgle he gave,
Then he threw himself into the billowy wave,
And an echo arose from the suicide's grave—
"Oh, willow, titwillow, titwillow!"

Now, I feel just as sure as I'm sure that my name
Isn't Willow, titwillow, titwillow,
That 'twas blighted affection that made him exclaim,
"Oh, willow, titwillow, titwillow!"
And if you remain callous and obdurate, I
Shall perish as he did, and you will know why,
Though I probably shall not exclaim as I die,
"Oh, willow, titwillow, titwillow!"

SIR W. S. GILBERT

THREE YOUNG RAT'S

THREE young rats with black felt hats,
Three young ducks with white straw flats,
Three young dogs with curling tails,
Three young cats with demi-veils,
Went out to walk with two young pigs
In satin vests and sorrel wigs;
But suddenly it chanced to rain,
And so they all went home again.

ANON

SONG OF SIXPENCE

SING a song o' sixpence,
A bagful of rye;
Four and twenty blackbirds,
Baked in a pie.
And when the pie was opened,
The birds began to sing,
And was not this a dainty dish
To set before a king?

The king was in the parlour,
Counting o'er his money;
The queen was in the kitchen,
Eating bread and honey;
The maid was in the garden,
Laying out the clothes,
Up came a magpie
And bit off her nose.

ANON

QUESTION & ANSWER

A WISE old owl sat on an oak,
The more he saw the less he spoke,
The less he spoke the more he heard:
Why can't we all be like that bird?

*We all just can't sit on an oak
Much less keep silent at your joke—
And that is why you haven't heard
Another peep from that old bird.*

ANON

THE KILKENNY CATS

THERE wanst was two cats of Kilkenny,
Each thought there was one cat too many,
So they quarreled and they fit,
They scratch'd and they bit,
Till, barrin' their nails,
And the tips of their tails,
Instead of two cats, there warnt any.

ANON

AND NOW WHERE'RE HE STRAYS

AND now where're he strays,
Among the Galilean mountains,
Or more unwelcome ways,
He's followed by two faithful fountains;
Two walking baths; two weeping motions;
Portable, & compendious oceans.

RICHARD CRASHAW

A little treasury

THE OLD WOMAN WHO LIVED
IN A SHOE

THERE was an old woman and she lived in a shoe,
She had so many children, she didn't know what to do.
She crumm'd 'em some porridge without any bread
And she borrowed a beetle, and she knocked 'em all on
the head.

Then out went the old woman to bespeak 'em a coffin
And when she came back she found 'em all a-loffing.
ANON

ENIGMA

'TWAS whispered in Heaven, 'twas muttered in Hell,
And echo caught softly the sound as it fell;
In the confines of earth 'twas permitted to rest,
And the depth of the ocean its presence confessed;
'TWAS seen in the lightning, 'twas heard in the thunder,
'TWILL be found in the spheres when they're riven asunder;

'TWAS given to man with his earliest breath,
It assists at his birth and attends him in death,
Presides o'er his happiness, honour, and health,
'TIS the prop of his house and the end of his wealth;
It begins every hope, every wish it must bound,
With the husbandman toils, and with monarchs is
crowned;

In the heaps of the miser 'tis hoarded with care,
But is sure to be lost in the prodigal heir;
Without it the soldier and sailor may roam,

But woe to the wretch who expels it from home;
In the whispers of conscience it there will be found,
Nor e'er in the whirlwind of passion be drowned;
It softens the heart, and though deaf to the ear,
It will make it acutely and instantly hear;
But in shades let it rest, like an elegant flower,
Oh! breathe on it softly, it dies in an hour.

C. M. FANSHAWE

SALLY IN OUR ALLEY

Of all the girls that are so smart
There's none like pretty Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.
There is no lady in the land
Is half so sweet as Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

Her father he makes cabbage-nets,
And through the streets does cry 'em;
Her mother she sells laces long
To such as please to buy 'em:
But sure such folks could ne'er beget
So sweet a girl as Sally!
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

When she is by, I leave my work,
I love her so sincerely;

A little treasury

My master comes like any Turk,
And bangs me most severely;
But let him bang his bellyful,
I'll bear it all for Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

Of all the days that's in the week
I dearly love but one day—
And that's the day that comes betwixt
A Saturday and Monday;
For then I'm drest all in my best
To walk abroad with Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

My master carries me to church,
And often am I blamed
Because I leave him in the lurch
As soon as text is named;
I leave the church in sermon-time
And slink away to Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

When Christmas comes about again,
O, then I shall have money;
I'll hoard it up, and box it all,
I'll give it to my honey:
I would it were ten thousand pound,
I'd give it all to Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

of Jabberwocky

'My master and the neighbours all,
Make game of me and Sally,
And, but for her, I'd better be
A slave and row a galley;
But when my seven long years are out,
O, then I'll marry Sally;
O, then we'll wed, and then we'll bed—
But not in our alley!

HENRY CAREY

KISSIN'

SOME say kissin's ae sin,
But I say, not at a';
For it's been in the warld
Ever sin' there were twa.

If it werena lawfu',
Lawyers wadna' 'low it;
If it werena haly,
Meenisters' wadna' dae it;

If it werena modest,
Maidens wadna' taste it;
If it werena plenty,
Puir folk couldna' hae it.

TO MISTRESS ISABEL PENNELL

By saint Mary, my lady,
Your mammy and your daddy
Brought forth a goodly baby!
My maiden Isabel,
Reflaring rosabel,
The flagrant camamel;
The ruddy rosary,
The sovereign rosemary,
The pretty strawberry;
The columbine, the nept,
The gilliflower well set,
The proper violet;
Ennewed your color
Is like the daisy flower
After the April shower;
Star of the morrow gray,
The blossom on the spray,
The freshest flower of May;
Maidenly demure,
Of womanhood the lure,
Wherefore I make you sure,
It were an heavenly health,
It were an endless wealth,
A life for God himself,
To hear this nightingale,
Among the birds smale,
Warbling in the vale,
Dug, dug,
Iug, iug.
Good year and good luck,
With chuck, chuck, chuck, chuck!

SONG

*Written at Sea, in the First Dutch War (1665), the night
before an Engagement*

To all you ladies now at land
We men at sea indite;
But first would have you understand
How hard it is to write:
The Muses now, and Neptune too,
We must implore to write to you—
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

For though the Muses should prove kind,
And fill our empty brain,
Yet if rough Neptune rouse the wind
To wave the azure main,
Our paper, pen, and ink, and we,
Roll up and down our ships at sea—
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

Then if we write not by each post,
Think not we are unkind;
Nor yet conclude our ships are lost
By Dutchmen or by wind:
Our tears we'll send a speedier way,
The tide shall bring them twice a day—
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

The King with wonder and surprise
Will swear the seas grow bold,
Because the tides will higher rise
Than e'er they did of old:
But let him know it is our tears

A little treasury

Bring floods of grief to Whitehall stairs—
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

Should foggy Opdam chance to know
Our sad and dismal story,
The Dutch would scorn so weak a foe,
And quit their fort at Goree:
For what resistance can they find
From men who've left their hearts behind?—
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

Let wind and weather do its worst,
Be you to us but kind;
Let Dutchmen vapour, Spaniards curse,
No sorrow we shall find:
'Tis then no matter how things go,
Or who's our friend, or who's our foe—
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

To pass our tedious hours away
We throw a merry main,
Or else at serious ombre play;
But why should we in vain
Each other's ruin thus pursue?
We were undone when we left you—
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

But now our fears tempestuous grow
And cast our hopes away;
Whilst you, regardless of our woe,
Sit careless at a play:
Perhaps permit some happier man
To kiss your hand, or flirt your fan—
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

of Jubbenwocky

When any mournful tune you hear,
That dies in every note
As if it sigh'd with each man's care
For being so remote,
Think then how often love we've made
To you, when all those tunes were play'd—
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

In justice you cannot refuse
To think of our distress,
When we for hopes of honour lose
Our certain happiness:
All those designs are but to prove
Ourselves more worthy of your love—
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

And now we've told you all our loves,
And likewise all our fears,
In hopes this declaration moves
Some pity for our tears:
Let's hear of no inconstancy—
We have too much of that at sea—
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

CHARLES SACKVILLE, EARL OF DORSET

THE WAR SONG OF DINAS VAWR

THE mountain sheep are sweeter,
But the valley sheep are fatter;
We therefore deemed it meeter
To carry off the latter.

A little treasury

We made an expedition;
We met a host and quelled it;
We forced a strong position,
And killed the men who held it.

On Dyfed's richest valley,
Where herds of kine were browsing,
We made a mighty sally,
To furnish our carousing.
Fierce warriors rushed to meet us;
We met them, and o'erthrew them:
They struggled hard to beat us;
But we conquered them, and slew them.

As we drove our prize at leisure,
The king marched forth to catch us:
His rage surpassed all measure,
But his people could not match us.
He fled to his hall-pillars;
And, ere our force we led off,
Some sacked his house and cellars,
While others cut his head off.

We there, in strife bewildering,
Spilt blood enough to swim in:
We orphaned many children,
And widowed many women.
The eagles and the ravens
We glutted with our foemen:
The heroes and the cravens,
The spearman and the bowmen.

We brought away from battle,
And much their land bemoaned them,
Two thousand head of cattle,

of Jabberwocky

And the head of him who owned them:
Edynfed, King of Dyfed,
His head was borne before us;
His wine and beasts supplied our feasts,
And his overthrow, our chorus.

THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK

THE OWL AND THE PUSSY-CAT

THE Owl and the Pussy-cat went to sea
In a beautiful pea-green boat:
They took some honey, and plenty of money
Wrapped up in a five-pound note.
The Owl looked up to the stars above,
And sang to a small guitar,
"O lovely Pussy, O Pussy, my love,
What a beautiful Pussy you are,
You are,
You are!
What a beautiful Pussy you are!"

Pussy said to the Owl, "You elegant fowl,
How charmingly sweet you sing!
Oh! let us be married; too long we have tarried:
But what shall we do for a ring?"
They sailed away, for a year and a day,
To the land where the bong-tree grows;
And there in a wood a Piggy-wig stood,
With a ring at the end of his nose,
His nose,
His nose,
With a ring at the end of his nose.

A little treasury

"Dear Pig, are you willing to sell for one shilling
Your ring?" Said the Piggy, "I will."
So they took it away, and were married next day
By the turkey who lives on the hill.
They dinèd on mince and slices of quince, -
Which they ate with a runcible spoon;
And hand in hand, on the edge of the sand,
They danced by the light of the moon,
The moon,
The moon,
They danced by the light of the moon.

EDWARD LEAF

A DUTCH LULLABY

WYNKEN, Blynken, and Nod one night
Sailed off in a wooden shoe,—
Sailed on a river of crystal light
Into a sea of dew.
"Where are you going, and what do you wish?"
The old moon asked the three.
"We have come to fish for the herring fish
That live in this beautiful sea;
Nets of silver and gold have wel"
Said Wynken,
Blynken,
And Nod.

The old moon laughed and sang a song,
As they rocked in the wooden shoe;
And the wind that sped them all night long
Ruffled the waves of dew.

of Jabberwocky

The little stars were the herring fish
That lived in that beautiful sea—
"Now cast your nets wherever you wish,—
Never afeard are we!"
Sq cried the stars to the fishermen three,
 Wynken,
 Blynken,
 And Nod.

All night long their nets they threw
To the stars in the twinkling foam,—
Then down from the skies came the wooden shoe,
 Bringing the fishermen home:
'Twas all so pretty a sail, it seemed
 As if it could not be;
And some folk thought 'twas a dream they'd dreamed
 Of sailing that beautiful sea;
But I shall name you the fishermen three:
 Wynken,
 Blynken,
 And Nod.

Wynken and Blynken are two little eyes.
And Nod is a little head,
And the wooden shoe that sailed the skies
Is a wee one's trundle-bed;
So shut your eyes while Mother sings
 Of wonderful sights that be,
And you shall see the beautiful things
 As you rock in the misty sea
Where the old shoe rocked the fishermen three:—
 Wynken,
 Blynken,
 And Nod.

EUGENE FIELD

A little treasury

"Dear Pig, are you willing to sell for one shilling
Your ring?" Said the Piggy, "I will."
So they took it away, and were married next day
By the turkey who lives on the hill.
They dined on mince and slices of quince,
Which they ate with a runcible spoon;
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 Blynken,
 And Nod.

EUGENE FIELD

BROOM, GREEN BROOM

THERE WAS an old man and he lived in a wood,
And his trade it was making of broom, of broom,
And he had a naughty boy, Jack, to his son,
And he lay in bed till 'twas noon, 'twas noon,
And he lay in bed till 'twas noon.

The father was vexed and sorely perplexed,
With passion he enters the room, the room,
'Come, sirrah,' he cried, 'I'll leather your hide,
If you will not go gather green broom, green broom,
If you will not go gather green broom.'

Master Jack being sly, he got up by and bye,
And went into the town to cry, 'Broom, green broom.'
So loud did he call, and so loudly did bawl,
'Pretty maids, do you want any broom, green broom?
Pretty maids, do you want any broom?'

A lady looked out of her lattice so high,
And spied Jack a-selling of broom, green broom,
Says she, 'You young blade, won't you give up your trade,
And marry a maid in full bloom, full bloom?
And marry a maid in full bloom?'

So they sent for the parson without more delay,
And married they were in the room, the room,
There was eating and drink, and says Jack, with a wink,
'This is better than cutting of broom, green broom,
This is better than cutting of broom.'

ANON

THE MAN ON THE
FLYING TRAPEZE

Oh, the girl that I loved she was handsome,
I tried all I knew her to please.
But I couldn't please her a quarter as well
As the man on the flying trapeze.

Chorus

Oh, he flies through the air with the greatest of ease,
This daring young man on the flying trapeze.
His figure is handsome, all girls he can please,
And my love he purloined her away.

Last night as usual I went to her home.
There sat her old father and mother alone.
I asked for my love and they soon made it known
That she-e had flown away.

She packed up her box and eloped in the night,
To go-o with him at his ease.
He lowered her down from a four-story flight,
By means of his flying trapeze.

He took her to town and he dressed her in tights,
That he-e might live at his ease.
He ordered her up to the tent's awful height,
To appear on the flying trapeze.

Now she flies through the air with the greatest of ease,
This daring young girl on the flying trapeze.
Her figure is handsome, all men she can please,
And my love is purloined away.

A little treasury

Once I was happy, but now I'm forlorn,
Like an old coat that is tattered and torn,
Left to this wide world to fret and to mourn,
Betrayed by a maid in her teens.

• ANON

THE MERMAID

'Twas a Friday morn when we set sail,
And we were not far from the land,
When the captain spied a lovely mermaid
With a comb and a glass in her hand.

Chorus

Oh the ocean waves may roll, may roll,
And the stormy winds may blow,
While we poor sailors go skipping through the tops,
And the landlubbers lie down below, below.
And the landlubbers lie down below.

Then up spoke the captain of our gallant ship,
And a well-spoken man was he,
"I have married a wife in Salem town;
And tonight she a widow will be."

(Chorus)

Then up spoke the boy of our gallant ship,
And a well-spoken lad was he,
"I've a father and mother in Boston City,
And tonight they childless will be."

(Chorus)

"Oh, the moon shines bright, and the stars give light;
Oh, my mother'll be looking for me;

of Jabbeneocky

She may look, she may weep, she may look to the deep,
She may look to the bottom of the sea."

(Chorus)

Then up spoke the cook of our gallant ship,
And a 'red-hot cook was he,
"I care more for my kettles and pots
Than I care for the bottom of the sea."

(Chorus)

Then three times round went our gallant ship,
And three times round went she;
Then three times round went our gallant ship,
And she went to the bottom of the sea.

(Chorus)

ANON

LIQUOR & LONGEVITY

THE horse and mule live 30 years
And nothing know of wines and beers.
The goat and sheep at 20 die
And never taste of Scotch or Rye.
The cow drinks water by the ton
And at 18 is mostly done.
The dog at 15 cashes in
Without the aid of rum and gin.
The cat in milk and water soaks
And then in 12 short years it croaks.
The modest, sober, bone-dry hen
Lays eggs for nogs, then dies at ten.
All animals are strictly dry:

A little treasury

They sinless live and swiftly die;
But sinful, ginful rum-soaked men
Survive for three score years and ten.
And some of them, a very few,
Stay pickled till they're 92.

* ANON

EVIDENCE READ AT THE TRIAL
OF THE KNAVE OF HEARTS

THEY told me you had been to her,
And mentioned me to him:
She gave me a good character,
But said I could not swim.

He sent them word I had not gone,
(We know it to be true:)
If she should push the matter on,
What would become of you?

I gave her one, they gave him two,
You gave us three or more;
They all returned from him to you,
Though they were mine before.

If I or she should chance to be
Involved in this affair,
He trusts to you to set them free,
Exactly as we were.

My notion was that you had been
(Before she had this fit)
An obstacle that came between
Him, and ourselves, and it.

of Jabberwocky

Don't let him know she liked them best,
For this must ever be
A secret, kept from all the rest,
Between yourself and me.

LEWIS CARROLL

THE TRAIN

I LIKE to see it lap the miles,
And lick the valleys up,
And stop to feed itself at tanks;
And then, prodigious, step

Around a pile of mountains,
And, supercilious, peer
In shanties by the sides of roads;
And then a quarry pare

To fit its sides, and crawl between,
Complaining all the while
In horrid, hooting stanza;
Then chase itself down hill

And neigh like Boanerges;
Then, punctual as a star,
Stop—docile and omnipotent—
At its own stable door.

EMILY DICKINSON

IF ALL THE WORLD
WERE PAPER

If all the world were paper,
And all the sea were ink:
And all the trees were bread and cheese,
What should we do for drink?

If all the world were sand 'o,
Oh, then what should we lack 'o;
If as they say there were no clay,
How should we make tobacco?

If all our vessels ran 'a,
If none but had a crack 'a;
If Spanish apes eat all the grapes,
What should we do for sack 'a?

If fryers had no bald pates,
Nor nuns had no dark cloysters,
If all the seas were beans and peas,
What should we do for oysters?

If there had been no projects,
Nor none that did great wrongs;
If fiddlers shall turn players all,
What should we do for songs?

If all things were eternal,
And nothing their end bringing;
If this should be, then how should we
Here make an end of singing?

ANON

THE LEMMINGS

I wish to write a philosophical poem,
And this is the foreword, or proem.
Let readers say (description or abuse),
"Pure were his morals, though his verse was loose."
The technical end I blame on Robert Frost,
On Butler, Skelton, and others whose names I've lost,
And, though this debt isn't very hard to find,
I blame it on W. H. Auden—he won't mind—
On Catullus, and Robert Bridges, I am afraid,
And really a host of others whose names I've mislaid:
For just as a Cavalier lyric shows good breeding
A reflective poem must demonstrate wide reading.
In such verse, too, a poet is at a loss if he
Doesn't remind the reader he knows philosophy.
Provided only they see that this poem is deep,
I don't care how many people it puts to sleep.
The special subject is lemmings, the pity of lemmings.
(Whenever I use that word I shall skip the rhyme,
And I think I'll have to use it time after time.)
If I knew what a lemming was, it would help a lot,
For I certainly can't list all things which it is not.
But sympathy shall make up for lack of science,
And ignorance be replaced by self-reliance.
After all, this is less like a monograph than a chat:
It is only a poem—philosophical, at that.
It will not be so long as Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*,
And barely as long as Juvenal's smallest *satura*.
Though briefness seem unphilosophical to some,
I think that's the way philosophy ought to come.
I shall view the result with something akin to pride
If I make you *feel* the lemmings from the inside.
This is the end of the proem
And the beginning of the poem.

A little treasury

At a sharp, mysterious call, as though in a dream,
The lemmings move, and down to the ocean they stream.
From the Urals, and the Carpathians, and the plains
Of Prussia, or Lapland, on they come in trains.
Or secretly, through the silent forests, the hordes
Rush to the sea in the tallest of Norway's fjords.
For them, the whole world beckons and is on fire,
So add what geographical names you desire:
To say the Ganges, Peru, the Cape of Good Hope,
Though it blur our accuracy, increases our scope.
And here I shall use T. S. Eliot's famed device
Of allusion to gain intensity—it's nice!
Read over Browning's *Piper of Hamelin*, please,
Read it slowly, with care, and at your ease,
And wherever he talks about either rats or mice
Just substitute lemmings. Isn't *that* a device?
You will then have sizes and colors of all sorts
And grotesque detail that fascinates as it distorts,
And all of the lemmings streaming in grave glee—
Not after the Piper, mind, but toward the sea.

We've now saved a hundred lines by referring to
Browning
And have got to the crucial part where the lemmings start
drowning.

Each one making his certain and positive lunge,
Into the black and freezing waters they plunge.
And from their noses, the ripples in endless V's
Complicate webs and woofs on the flux of the seas.
Like flocks of starlings, or minnows in lucent shoals,
Infinite atoms move toward communal goals.
The northern night is above, and the water beneath,
(How far off now is the nest on the rock-strewn heath!)
And all are swimming together in regular tread

762

As the strokes of their feet keep pulsing their noses ahead.
Beyond, and straight, and sure, and together they swim.
Where they are when the sun looks over the ocean's rim
Nobody knows. I would like to say, if I dare,
That the point of this poem is: *Nobody ought to care.*
So far I could have prettied this up a lot
If this had been a descriptive poem. It's not.
Or I might have given you facts that were terrific,
Provided my aim were solely scientific.
As it is, unless I hear some better suggestions,
We will open this poem to philosophical questions.

But one thing first: I admit I admire the lemmings.
Together plunging far out to sea by night—
How express and admirable! how lemming! how right!
That one act only I know in the lemmings' history;
And although its end may always remain a mystery,
The lemmings fill me with gratitude and cheer
For acting one act that is so sure and clear.
There must be a thousand species of rodents and stoats,
Fieldmice, moles, muskrats, hedgehogs, mink, dwarf
goats,
That live the humdrum life of the seasons through:
Gray dawns, gray fear, gray sleep, and little to do.
Even Noah forgot them, above or under the ground.
But we remember the lemmings, because they drowned.
A species famous abroad for a single act
Wins glory that less energetic fauna have lacked.
Now various beasts are bigger, stronger, older,
More popular, quicker on trigger, longer, bolder;
But in praise of the lemmings, by all beasts this is allowed:
No other landlubbers swim out to sea in a crowd.
Here let us cease this unreasoning panegyric
And back to our deep and philosophical lyric.

A little treasury

If the lemmings unite to swim out to sea and die,
The inevitable and perplexing question is *Why?*
We might as well face it squarely and on the spot
Without a flippant or cynical asking *Why not?*

(a) Perhaps the lemming race is by nature joyous
And cannot conceive of the ocean flood as noxious.

(b) Their cosmic outlook, perhaps, is far from wide
So that they know of waves, but ignore the tide,
And do not believe that it's leagues from this side to that
side.

(c) Some people think that the race as a whole is feck-
less

And kills itself off for the pleasure of being reckless.

(d) Still more maintain that the lemming brain is
blighted;

(e) While some physiologists hold that the creature's
nearsighted.

(f) Surroundings and habit, say others, have made them
fools:

The lemmings come from countries of lakes and of pools;
They cannot adapt to new places, they are so fond,
And jump in the ocean as if it could be but a pond.

(g) One theory runs that deep in the past of the race
On Atlantis the lemmings were happy all over the place,
And, when that continent sank at some black touch of
magic,

The end of the lemmings was comprehensively tragic.
Ancestral mourning now leads them shorewards to weep
And they find the golden age thousand fathoms deep.
This theory, though, I shan't even bother to mention,
For it bears in itself the marks of a febrile invention.
And blaming one's gloom on the dead—on a lot of dead,
too—

Is one of the things that a gentleman doesn't do.

(h) A further hypothesis leads to many confusions

of Jabberwocky

Because it supposes the lemmings are conscious Malthusians,

And if these wee beasts have practised his laws for so long
Then Malthus and countless lemmings can't be wrong.

It holds, that lemmings, viewed in their brooding habits,
Are as sanguine, redundant, prolific, and careless as rabbits,

And knowing that population outstrips supply,
A certain proportion resolves, quite wisely, to die.

This sort of thing should appeal to G. B. Shaw:

Good sense, you see, no fuss, and community law.

The unemployed, unwanted, unloved, and unwed,

Swim out to ocean, and never a tear is shed;

Or if a tear falls, it mixes quick with the brine

And loses all personal sense of yours and mine.

The Greek youth shipped for the Minotaur's delectation

Is a more romantic means of saving a nation;

But I much prefer this classical lemming way

(As Vigny might put it) of "Nages, et meurs sans parler."

It avoids the melodramatically pathetic

And isn't, like Jude the Obscure's hanged children,
frenetic;

Yet Hardy's words fit, for the lemmings, as well as any,

And perhaps the last thought of each lemming is "WE
WAS TOO MANY."

All of these explanations that don't explain

You may, with my kindest permission, throw down the
drain.

They cannot illumine, or mar, in the least degree

The simple fact of the lemmings and the sea.

I sometimes think we'd be further out of the wood

If we didn't believe our brains were so frightfully good.

The last infirmity of the noble mind

Is its faith that the noble mind leaves all else behind.

A little treasury

To believe anything which is not the product of reason
Is, to the human race in its latest development, treason.
And thanks to the Russells, the Huxleys, the Deweys and
Shaws,

We'll all soon be rescued from Superstition's jaws.
Those ultimate secrets of mystery or of sorrow
That we don't grasp today, will be clear as crystal to-
morrow.

The fear and the ecstasies that our grandfathers share
Come from another world that isn't there.
Let us endure, our new wise men say, for a season,
For all will be clarified soon in the light of pure reason.

But the lemmings' acts may be past reach of our brain,
Perhaps we had better accept what we can't explain.
Instincts within us are fixed so central and certain
That our tampering minds cannot pull aside the curtain.
And still, though we prove that it should or it shouldn't be,
The lemmings continue their progress out to sea.
I know this amounts almost to accepting God
And know also today such belief is most certainly odd.
Yet I would prefer, when we look at human behavior,
If we must be saved, to have God—not man—for a savior,
Give us a bit less pride and a little more trust:
We but guess we are terribly clever; we know we are dust.
Grace is a ware which should be on the front of our
shelves,

And we have most grace when we don't try to make it
ourselves.

After all, reflective verse shouldn't give the answers.
It should merely set the questions moving like dancers,
And should leave us, where we began, with the excellent
notion

Of the lemmings moving in unison toward the ocean.

DONALD A. STAUFFER

Appendix

Index of First Lines

Index of Authors and Titles

INDEX OF FIRST LINES

About suffering they were never wrong.....	165
A child said <i>What is the grass?</i>	53
Adieu, farewell earth's bliss.....	255
A flea and a fly in a fluo	728
A flying word from here and there.....	663
After great pain a formal feeling comes.....	623
Ah, what avails the sceptred race.....	199
A <i>little learning</i> is a dang'rous thing.....	673
All kings, and all their favorites.....	601
All the world's a stage	181
All the flowers of the spring.....	174
All things have savour, though some very small. .	738
Although thy hand and faith and good works too. .	411
A beautiful lady named Psyche.....	728
A man that had six mortal wounds, a man.....	228
Among the smoke and fog of a December afternoon	564
And did those feet in ancient time.....	649
An epicure, dining at Crewe.....	728
And now where'er he strays.....	741
Announced by all the trumpets of the sky.....	431
A noiseless patient spider.....	236
A poor lad once and a lad so trim.....	110
• A private madness has prevailed.....	320
As I came through the desert thus it was.....	244
As I in hoary winter's night.....	659
As I sat at the Café I said to myself.....	710
As it fell upon a day.....	172
Ask me no more where Jove bestows.....	279
A slumber did my spirit seal.....	230
As sometimes in a dead man's face.....	230
As through the land at eve we went.....	349
A sweet disorder in the dress.....	428
	769

Index of First Lines

As we rush, as we rush in the Train.....	581
A thing of beauty is a joy for ever.....	96
At the round earth's imagined corners, blow.....	645
A wise old owl sat on an oak.....	741
A wonderful bird is the pelican.....	727
Batter my heart, three-personed God; for, you....	651
Because I do not hope to turn again.....	627
Before I sigh my last gasp, let me breathe.....	592
Before the beginning of years.....	90
Behold her, single in the field.....	304
Believe me, if all those endearing young charms..	282
Be near me when my light is low.....	261
Bid adieu, adieu, adieu.....	392
Blow, blow, thou winter wind.....	289
Break, break, break.....	453
Bright star! would I were steadfast as thou art...	383
Busy, curious, thirsty fly!.....	458
Busy old fool, unruly Sun.....	370
But he followed the pair to Pawtucket.....	729
By dark sovereignty the apparition head.....	193
By our first strange and fatal interview.....	384
By saint Mary, my lady.....	746
By the rude bridge that arched the flood.....	209
Calm was the day, and through the trembling air..	394
Can I see another's woe.....	103
Captain Carpenter rose up in his prime.....	176
Care-charmer sleep, son of the sable night.....	174
Cold in the earth—and the deep snow piled above thee.....	449
"Come, come," said Tom's father, "at your time of life.....	733
Come into the garden, Maud.....	346
770	

Index of First Lines

Come live with me and be my love.	358
Come, Madam, come, all rest my powers defy. . . .	426
Come, Sleep; O Sleep! the certain knot of peace. .	339
Complacencies of the peignoir, and late.	256
Comrades, leave me here a little, while as yet 'tis early morn	77
Consider this and in our time.	688
Consider this small dust, here in the glass.	456
· Cupid and my Campaspe play'd.	357
Damn it all! all this our South stinks peace.	129
Dark Angel, with thine aching lust.	107
Dash back that ocean with a pier.	733
Dear hope! Earth's dowry and heaven's debt!	576
Dear love, for nothing less than thee.	388
Dear, why should you command me to my rest. . . .	389
Death, be not proud though some have called thee	159
Deep on the convent-roof the snows.	648
Did all the lets and bars appear.	130
Did not the heavenly rhetoric of thine eye.	373
Down in the depth of mine iniquity.	647
Drink to me only with thine eyes.	285
Earth has not anything to show more fair.	55
· Echo, I ween, will in the wood reply.	722
Elected Silence, sing to me.	635
Euclid alone has looked on Beauty bare.	322
Fair is my Love and cruel as she's fair.	344
Farewell! a long farewell, to all my greatness. . . .	183
Farewell, rewards and fairies.	118
Farewell! thou art too dear for my possessing. . . .	361
Farewell, ungrateful traitor	341
Fat black bucks in a wine-barrel room.	491
	771

Index of First Lines

Fear no more the heat o' the sun	208
Flee fro the prees, and dwelle with sothfastnesse . .	583
Flower in the crannied wall	182
Flow gently, sweet Afton! amang thy green braes . .	283
Fly envious Time, till thou run out thy race	454
For God sake hold your tongue, and let me love . .	364
For this your mother sweated in the cold	175
For three years, out of key with his time	668
Frankie and Johnny were lovers	723
From harmony, from heavenly harmony	653
From the hag and hungry goblin	119
From you have I been absent in the spring	63
Full fathom five thy father lies	208
Full many a glorious morning have I seen	366
Gather ye rosebuds while ye may	420
Gay go up, and gay go down	711
Gin a body meet a body	291
Glooms of the live-oaks, beautiful-braided and woven	98
Glorious the sun in mid career	658
Glory be to God for dappled things	104
Go and catch a falling star	409
Good people all, of every sort	701
Great fleas have little fleas upon their backs to bite 'em	735
Green grow the rushes, O	412
Grow old along with me	464
Had we but world 'enough, and time	334
Hail to thee, blithe spirit!	309
Happy those early days, when I	74
Hark! hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings	66
(Spenser's Ireland) has not altered	113

Index of First Lines

Having been tenant long to a rich lord.....	650
Hal whare ye gaun, ye crawlin' ferlie?.....	562
Hear, ye ladies that despise.....	421
He died in attempting to swallow.....	736
He did not wear his scarlet coat.....	534
He jests at scars, that never felt a wound.....	400
Helen, thy beauty is to me.....	406
Hence, loathéd Melancholy.....	611
Hence, vain deluding joys.....	615
Here lie I, Martin Elginbrodde.....	734
Her lips they were redder than coral.....	731
He sang of God, the mighty source.....	622
Here, where the world is quiet.....	145
He that is in the battle slain.....	736
He that loves a rosy cheek.....	416
Highway, since you my chief Parnassus be.....	333
Sing hey diddle diddle, the cat and the fiddle....	738
Hope, whose weak being ruined is.....	575
How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.....	360
How happy is he born and taught.....	582
How like an angel came I down!.....	75
How like a winter hath my absence been.....	360
How many times do I love thee, dear?.....	287
How should I your true love know.....	294
How soon hath Time the subtle thief of youth....	600
How sweet I roam'd from field to field.....	297
How vainly men themselves amaze.....	49
Hyd, Absolon, thy gilte tresses clere.....	407
I am his Highness' dog at Kew.....	734
I am monarch of all I survey.....	92
I am not resigned to the shutting away of loving hearts in the hard ground.....	155
I arise from dreams of thee.....	337
	773

Index of First Lines

I asked a thief to steal me a peach.	185
I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers. . . .	38
I could not sleep for thinking of the sky.	442
I couldn't touch a stop and turn a screw.	679
I do not love thee, Doctor Fell.	732
I envy not in any moods.	340
If all be true that I do think.	732
If all the world and love were young.	359
If all the world were paper.	760
If aught of oaten stop or pastoral song.	42
If one should bring me this report.	154
If the man who turnips cries.	737
If the red slayer thinks he slays.	105
If thou must love me, let it be for naught.	363
If to be absent were to be.	236
If yet I have not all thy love.	386
I had a little nut-tree, nothing would it bear.	736
I had written to Aunt Maud.	732
I have a little shadow that goes in and out with me	709
I have had playmates, I have had companions. . . .	451
I held it truth, with him who sings.	237
I know that I shall meet my fate.	133
I leant upon a coppice gate.	452
I like my body when it is with your.	426
I like to see it lap the miles.	759
I long to talk with some old lover's ghost.	362
I made my song a coat.	672
I met the Bishop on the road.	386
In a coign of the cliff between lowland and high- land	156
In a valley of this restless mind.	483
In June, amid the golden fields.	136
In May, when sea-winds pierced our solitudes. . . .	105
In spite of all the learned have said.	142

Index of First Lines

In the greenest of our valleys	321
In the naked bed, in Plato's cave	184
In Virginè the sweltry sun 'gan sheene	480
In what torn ship so ever I embark	625
In Xanadu did Kubla Khan	440
I remember a house where all were good	98
I remember, I remember	448
I saw a Chapel all of gold	181
I saw a peacock with a fiery tail	721
I saw eternity the other night	655
I sit on the surge called ten stories tall	262
Is there, for honest poverty	690
I stood on the bridge at midnight	733
I struck the board, and cried, No more!	657
I think continually of those who were truly great . .	94
I think I could turn and live with animals, they are so placid and self-contained	548
It is an ancient Mariner	499
It is not growing like a tree	603
It is the miller's daughter	343
It lies not in our power to love or hate	363
It was a kind and northern face	317
It was a lover and his lass	62
It was many and many a year ago	487
I used to love my garden	731
I've heard them lilting at our ewe-milking	207
I wage not any feud with Death	144
I wake and feel the fell of dark, not day	176
I walk through the long schoolroom questioning . .	70
I wandered lonely as a cloud	37
I was angry with my friend	595
I went to the Garden of Love	179
I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree	597
I wish I were where Helen lies	489
	775

Index of First Lines

I, with whose colors Myra dressed her head.	331
I wonder by my troth what thou and I.	378
I would have my own vision.	589
Jenny kiss'd me when we met.	416
John Anderson, my jo, John.	464
Know then thyself, presume not God to scan. . . .	604
Last night, ah, yesternight, betwixt her lips and mine	308
Leave me, O Love, which reachest but to dust. . .	622
Let me not to the marriage of true minds.	344
Let readers say (description or abuse).	761
Let the bird of loudest lay.	381
Like to the clear in highest sphere.	414
Like to the falling of a star.	444
Little Lamb, who made thee?	110
Love in my bosom like a bee.	356
Love is a sickness full of woes.	371
Love not me for comely grace.	290
Loving in truth, and fain in verse my love to show	665
Mark but this flea, and mark in this.	375
Mary ann has gone to rest.	735
Maxwelton's braes are bonnie.	298
Methought I saw my late espoused Saint.	231
Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord	288
Monday's child is fair of face.	737
Much have I travelled in the realms of gold. . . .	678
Music, when soft voices die.	150
My good blade carves the casques of men.	531
My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains. . .	305

Index of First Lines

My heart is like a singing bird.....	332
My heart leaps up when I behold.....	68
My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here	285
My love in her attire doth show her wit.....	287
My love is like a red red rose.....	286
My love is like to ice, and I to fire.....	339
My love is of a birth as rare.....	336
My love is strengthen'd, though more weak in seeming	341
My mind to me a kingdom is.....	585
My prime of youth is but a frost of cares.....	213
My soul looked down from a vague height with Death	126
My true love hath my heart, and I have his.....	391
Never until the mankind making.....	128
No, no; for my virginity.....	731
No, no, poor suffering heart, no change endeavour	330
Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note.....	133
Nothing to do but work.....	713
No, I'll not, carrion comfort, Despair, not feast on thee	171
Not marble, nor the gilded monuments.....	677
Not mine own fears, nor the prophetic soul.....	666
Now, my co-mates, and brothers in exile.....	594
Now all the truth is out.....	65
Now the hungry lion roars.....	124
O blithe New-comer I have heard.....	60
O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done..	662
Of all the girls that are so smart.....	743
Oft, in the stillly night.....	446
Oh Life, thou Nothing's younger brother!.....	602
O how much more doth beauty beauteous seem..	376
	777

Index of First Lines

Oh, the girl that I love she was handsome.....	755
Oh, to be in England.....	59
Oh yet we trust that somehow good.....	579
O lovely O most charming pug.....	714
O mistress mine, where are you roaming?.....	835
On a starr'd night Prince Lucifer uprose.....	434
On a tree by a river a little tom-tit.....	739
Once more the storm is howling, and half hid....	248
Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered weak and weary.....	542
One day I wrote her name upon the strand.....	345
On either side the river lie.....	474
One more Unfortunate.....	210
O never say that I was false of heart.....	342
One word is too often profaned.....	300
O sing unto my roundelay.....	194
Our revels now are ended. These our actors.....	141
Out of the gray air grew snow and more snow....	432
Out of the night that covers me.....	578
Out upon it, I have loved.....	418
Over his keys the musing organist.....	46
Over the mountains.....	328
O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms.....	161
O where are you going, says Milder to Malder....	123
"O where ha'e ye been, Lord Randal, my son?...	496
O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being	51
O world invisible, we view thee.....	621
O ye that put your trust and confidence.....	149
Peace on New England, on the shingled white houses, on golden.....	443
Perfect little body, without fault or stain on thee..	138
Performances, assortments, résumés.....	683
Piping down the valleys wild.....	296

Index of First Lines

Poor soul, the center of my sinful earth.....	231
Red lips are not so red.....	132
Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky.....	660
Roll on, thou ball, roll on!.....	698
' Said lady once to lover.....	524
Say not the struggle naught availeth.....	580
Seamen three! What men be ye?.....	714
Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness!.....	44
See how the orient dew.....	644
See the old unhappy bull.....	555
Send home my long-strayed eyes to me.....	410
Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?.....	367
Shall I, wasting in despair.....	417
She dwelt among the untrodden ways.....	156
She stood breast-high amid the corn.....	405
She walks in beauty, like the night.....	407
She was poor, but she was honest.....	717
Should auld acquaintance be forgot.....	284
Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more.....	293
Silence augmenteth grief, writing increaseth rage	674
Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part. . .	388
Some say kissin' ae sin.....	745
' Some years of late, in eighty-eight.....	522
Sing a song of sixpence.....	740
Sir, I admit your general rule.....	734
Sir Christopher Wren.....	730
Spring, the sweet Spring, is the year's pleasant king	60
Strange fits of passion have I known.....	393
Stranger! Approach this spot with gravity.....	730
Strew on her roses, roses.....	201
Strong is the horse upon his speed.....	596
Sumer is icumen in.....	64

Index of First Lines

Sunset and evening star	163
Sylvia the fair, in the bloom of fifteen	422
Take, O take those lips away	292
Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean	445
Tell me not, Sweet, I am unkind	349
Tell me where is fancy bred	296
That is no country for old men. The young	439
That time of year thou mayest in me behold	355
That which her slender waist confined	413
The Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold . .	135
The barge she sat in, like a burnish'd throne	401
The blessed damozel leaned out	528
The Cock is crowing	62
The Curfew tolls the knell of parting day	202
The expense of spirit in a waste of shame	364
The fountains mingle with the rivers	390
The glories of our blood and state	160
The harp that once through Tara's halls	278
The heavy bear who goes with me	192
The horse and mule live 30 years	757
The little toy dog is covered with dust	139
The loppèd tree in time may grow again	580
The lowest trees have tops, the ant here gall	346
The lunatic, the lover, and the poet	672
The man in the wilderness asked of me	738
The more we live, more brief appear	447
The mountain and the squirrel	594
The mountain sheep are sweeter	749
The night has a thousand eyes	381
The nightingale, as soon as April bringeth	378
The Owl and the Pussy-cat went to sea	751
The Pobble who has no toes	702
The poetry of earth is never dead	37

Index of First Lines

The quality of mercy is not strained.....	589
The rain it raineth every day.....	730
There are wolves in the next room waiting.....	89
There be none of Beauty's daughters.....	408
There is a garden in her face.....	280
There is a panther caged within my breast.....	180
There is a pleasure in the pathless woods.....	57
There is a road that turning always.....	72
There is sweet music here that softer falls.....	312
There, my blessing with thee.....	599
There once was a man from Nantucket.....	729
There once were some people called Sioux.....	735
There's a certain slant of light.....	148
"There's been an accident," they said.....	732
There wanst was two cats of Kilkenny.....	741
There was a little girl.....	737
There was a Man of Thessaly.....	738
There was a naughty Boy.....	700
There was an old man and he lived in the wood...	754
There was an Old Man who said, "Hush!".....	729
There was an old party of Lyme.....	728
There was an old woman and she lived in a shoe..	742
There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream	221
There was a young fellow named Hall.....	728
There was a Young Lady of Portugal.....	729
There was a young lady of Spain.....	728
There was a young man of St. Bees.....	727
These acres, always again lost.....	324
The seagull, spreadeagled, splayed on the wind...	199
The sea is calm to-night.....	318
These are my murmur-laden shells that keep.....	235
These hearts were woven of human joys and cares.	136
The skies they were ashen and sober.....	325
The spacious firmament on high.....	650
	781

Index of First Lines

The splendour falls on castle walls.....	319
The steed bit his master.....	733
The sun was shining on the sea.....	706
The three men coming down the winter hill.....	574
The time you won your town the race.....	140
The world is charged with the grandeur of God...	106
The world is too much with us: late and soon	323
They are all gone into the world of light!.....	232
The year's at the spring.....	64
They flee from me that sometime did me seek....	167
They that have power to hurt, and will do none...	191
They told me you had been to her.....	758
This darksome burn, horseback brown.....	41
This is the grave of Mike O'Day.....	730
This is the month, and this the happy morn.....	636
This life which seems so fair.....	298
Those occasions involving the veering of axles...	169
Thou blind man's mark, thou fool's self-chosen snare	610
Thou shalt have one God only; who.....	705
Thou still unravished bride of quietness!.....	95
Three things there be in man's opinion dear.....	434
Three young rats with black felt hats.....	740
Through that window—all else being extinct.....	69
Tiger, tiger, burning bright.....	624
Time ends when vision sees its lapse in.....	66
Time hath, my Lord, a wallet at his back.....	185
Time present and time past.....	457
Tired with all these, for restful death I cry.....	377
'Tis the year's midnight, and it is the day's.....	214
'Tis true, 'tis day; what though it be?.....	338
To all you ladies now at land.....	747
To be, or not to be: that is the question.....	166
To gild refined gold, to paint the lily.....	591

Index of First Lines

To him who in the love of Nature holds.....	151
To John I owed great obligation.....	731
To Mercy, Pity, Peace and Love.....	109
To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day.....	420
To one who has been long in city pent.....	42
To see a World in a grain of sand.....	435
Treason doth never prosper—What's the reason?..	737
True Thomas lay on Huntlie bank.....	471
Turning and turning in the widening gyre.....	450
'Twas a Friday morn when we set sail.....	756
'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves	697
'Twas on a lofty vase's side.....	554
'Twas whispered in Heaven, 'twas muttered in Hell	742
Two coffees in the Español, the last.....	251
Two roads diverged in a yellow wood.....	568
Under the greenwood tree.....	56
Under the wide and starry sky.....	164
Under yonder beech-tree single on the green-sward	351
Up the airy mountain.....	116
Up in the North, a long way off.....	736
Vital spark of heavenly flame!.....	163
Wake! For the Sun, who scattered into flight....	264
Waken, lords and ladies gay.....	281
Was this the face that launched a thousand ships..	401
We are the music-makers.....	676
Webster was much possessed by death.....	234
Weep no more, nor sigh, nor groan.....	290
Wee, sleekit, cow'rin', tim'rous beastie	549
Well then! I now do plainly see	590
We make our meek adjustments.....	678
Were I, who to my cost already am.....	187
	783

Index of First Lines

Western wind, when will thou blow.	330
What are little boys made of, made off?	721
What is your substance, whereof are you made. . . .	374
What lips my lips have kissed, and where, and why	379
When all the world is young, lad.	291
Whenas in silks my Julia goes.	428
Whenever Richard Cory went down town	179
When God at first made man.	646
When he killed the Mudjokivis.	715
When I am dead, my dearest.	151
When icicles hang by the wall.	430
When I consider how my light is spent.	599
When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes. . . .	371
When in the chronicle of wasted time.	380
When in the mirror of a permanent tear.	197
When I was a bachelor, I lived by myself.	699
When lovely woman stoops to folly.	191
When Love with unconfined wings	350
When men were all sleep the snow came flying. . .	429
When my grave is broke up again.	372
When people's ill they comes to I.	734
When Sir Joshua Reynolds died.	735
When that I was and a little tiny boy.	299
When the lamp is shattered.	168
When the pods went pop on the broom, green broom	551
When the present has latched its postern behind my tremulous stay	455
When to the sessions of sweet silent thought. . .	354
When you are old and gray and full of sleep. . .	463
Wherefore, unlaurelled Boy	666
Where, like a pillow on a bed.	367
Where the pools are bright and deep.	295
Where we went in the boat was a long bay.	112

Index of First Lines

Whether on Ida's shady brow.....	667
Whither, 'midst falling dew.....	597
Who	238
Who'er she be	403
Whoever loves, if he do not propose.....	423
Who is at my window? Who? Who?.....	626
Who is Silvia? what is she.....	293
Who is the happy Warrior? Who is he.....	586
Whose woods these are I think I know.....	143
"Why does your brand sae drop wi' blude.....	497
Why so pale and wan, fond lover?.....	419
Wilt thou forgive that sin where I begun.....	652
Winter is gone, and spring is over.....	730
With how sad steps, O Moon, thou climb'st the skies!	379
Wynken, Blynken, and Nod one night.....	752
Ye distant spires, ye antique towers.....	607
Ye tradeful Merchants, that, with weary toil.....	391
Yesterday all the past. The language of size.....	691
Yet once more, O ye laurels, and once more.....	215
"You are old, Father William," the young man said	704
You goat-herd Gods, that love the grassy mountains	301
<i>Young folks, old folks, everybody come</i>	719
You spotted snakes with double tongue.....	125
You will find me drinking rum.....	716

INDEX OF AUTHORS AND TITLES

ADDISON, Joseph (1672-1719),	Hey Diddle Diddle . . .	738
Hymn 650	If All the World Were	
AIKEN, Conrad (b. 1889),	Paper 760	
Preludes to Attitude .	I Had a Little	
251	Nut-Tree	736
The Room 69	Quia Amore Languet .	483
ALDRICH, Henry (1647-1710),	I Saw a Peacock . . .	721
The Five Reasons . . .	I Stood on the Bridge .	733
732	Kissin' 745	
ALLINGHAM, William	Liquor &	
(1824-1889),	Longevity	757
The Fairies 116	London Bells	711
ANONYMOUS,	Lord Randal	496
A Beautiful Lady	Love Not Me for	
Named Psyche . . .	Comely Grace . . .	290
728	Love Will Find Out	
A Dentist 730	the Way	328
A Flea and a Fly in a	Madrigal	287
Flue 728	Mary Ann	735
All Things Have	Mike O'Day	730
Savour 738	Monday's Child . . .	737
An Epicure 728	On a Clergyman's Horse	
At Aberdeen 734	Biting Him	733
A Wonderful Bird is	Poor But Honest . . .	717
the Pelican 727	Question & Answer . .	741
Bible Stories 719	Sir Christopher Wren	730
Broom, Green	Song of Sixpence . . .	740
Broom 754	The Cutty Wren . . .	123
But he followed the	The Indian	735
pair to Pawtucket .	The Kilkenny Cats . .	741
729	The Lover in Winter	
Cuckoo Song 64	Plaineth for the	
Edward, Edward . . .	Spring 330	
497	The Man in the	
Fight 736	Wilderness	738
Foggy, Foggy Dew . .	The Man of Thessaly	738
699	The Man on the	
Frankie and Johnny .	Flying Trapeze . . .	755
723	The Mermaid	756
Helen of Kirconnell .		
489		
Her Lips 731		

Index of Authors and Titles

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>The Modern Hia-
watha 715</p> <p>The Old Woman Who
Lived in a Shoe... 742</p> <p>The Rain 730</p> <p>There Was a Little
Girl 737</p> <p>There Once Was a
Man from Nan-
tucket 729</p> <p>There Was an Old
Party of Lyme 728</p> <p>There Was a Young
Fellow Named Hall 728</p> <p>There Was a Young
Lady of Spain 728</p> <p>There Was a Young
Man of St. Bees .. 727</p> <p>The Spanish Armado. 522</p> <p>Thomas the Rhymer. 471</p> <p>Three Young Rats.. 740</p> <p>Tom o'Bedlam's
Song 119</p> <p>Up in the North... 736</p> <p>What Are Folks Made
Of 721</p> <p>Who Is at My
Window? 626</p> <p>ARNOLD, Matthew
(1822-1888),
Dover Beach 318</p> <p>Requiescat 201</p> <p>AUDEN, W. H. (b. 1907),
Consider This and in
Our Time 688</p> <p>Musée Des Beaux
Arts 165</p> <p>Spain 691</p> <p>AUSTIN, Alfred (1835-1913)
Winter Is Gone..... 730</p> | <p>BARKER, George
(b. 1913),
Memorial, for Two
Young Seamen ... 199</p> <p>Munich Elegy No. 1.. 169</p> <p>BAINFIELD, Richard
(1574-1627),
To the Nightingale .. 172</p> <p>BEDDOES, Thomas Lovell
(1803-1849),
Song 287</p> <p>BERRYMAN, John
(b. 1914),
Winter Landscape .. 574</p> <p>BLAKE, William
(1757-1827),
A Poison Tree 595</p> <p>Auguries of Innocence 435</p> <p>I Saw a Chapel All of
Gold 181</p> <p>On Another's Sorrow. 103</p> <p>Reeds of Innocence. 296</p> <p>Song 297</p> <p>The Angel 185</p> <p>The Divine Image ... 109</p> <p>The Garden of Love. 179</p> <p>The Lamb 110</p> <p>The New Jerusalem.. 649</p> <p>To the Muses 667</p> <p>Sir Joshua Reynolds. 735</p> <p>The Tiger 624</p> <p>BOURDILLON, Francis
William (1852-1921),
The Night Has a
Thousand Eyes ... 331</p> |
|--|--|

Index of Authors and Titles

- BRIDGES, Robert
(1844-1930),
London Snow 429
On a Dead Child 138
- BRONTË, Emily
(1818-1848),
Remembrance 449
- BROOKE, Rupert
(1887-1915),
The Dead 136
- BROWN, Thomas
(1663-1704),
Doctor Fell 732
- BROWNING, Elizabeth
Barrett (1806-1861),
How Do I Love Thee? 360
If Thou Must Love Me 363
- BROWNING, Robert
(1812-1889),
Home-Thoughts from
Abroad 59
Pippa's Song 64
Rabbi Ben Ezra..... 464
- BRYANT, William Cullen
(1794-1878),
Thanatopsis 151
To a Waterfowl 597
- BURNS, Robert
(1759-1796),
Auld Lang Syne 284
Comin' Thro' the Rye 291
For A' That and A'
That 690
Green Grow the
Rashes 412
- John Anderson 464
My Heart's in the
Highlands 285
My Love is Like a Red
Red Rose 286
Sweet Afton 283
To a Louse 562
To a Mouse 549
- BYRON, George Gordon,
Lord Byron
(1788-1824),
She Walks in Beauty . 407
The Destruction of
Sennacherib 135
There Be None of
Beauty's Daughters 408
The Sea 57
- CAMPBELL, Roy (b. 1902),
The Death of Polybius
Jubb 736
- CAMPBELL, Thomas
(1774-1844),
The River of Life ... 447
- CAMPION, Thomas
(1567?-1619),
Cherry-Ripe 280
- CAREW, Thomas
(1595?-1639P),
Song 279
He That Loves a Rosy
Cheek 416
- CAREY, Henry
(1693?-1743),
Sally in our Alley ... 743

Index of Authors and Titles

- CARROLL, Lewis (Rev.
C. L. Dodgson),
(1832-1898),
Evidence Read at the
Trial of the Knave
of Hearts 758
Father William 704
Jabberwocky 697
The Walrus and the
Carpenter 706
- CHATTERTON, Thomas
(1752-1770),
An Excelente Balade
of Charitie 480
Song from Aella 194
- CHAUCER, Geoffrey
(1340-1400),
Balade 407
Balade de Bon Conseil 583
- CHESTERTON, G. K.
(1874-1936),
The Logical
Vegetarian 716
- CLOUGH, Arthur Hugh
(1819-1864),
from Spectator Ab
Extra 710
Say Not the Struggle
Naught Availeth .. 580
The Latest Decalogue 705
- COLERIDGE, Samuel Taylor
(1772-1843),
Epigram 734
Kubla Khan 440
The Rime of the An-
cient Mariner 499
- COLLINS, William
(1721-1759),
Ode to Evening. 42
- CORBET, Richard
(1562-1635),
The Fairies' Farewell. 118
- COWLEY, Abraham
(1618-1667),
Against Hope 575
Life and Fame..... 602
The Wish 590
- COWPER, William
(1731-1800),
The Solitude of Alex-
ander Selkirk 92
- CRANE, Hart (1899-1932),
Chaplinesque 678
Praise for an Urn... 317
The Tunnel 683
- CRASHAW, Richard
(1613-1649),
And Now Where'er He
Strays 741
For Hope 576
Wishes for the Sup-
posed Mistress 403
- CUMMINGS, E. E.
(b. 1894),
I Like My Body 426
- DANIEL, Samuel
(1562-1619),
Care-Charmer Sleep. 174
Fair Is My Love.... 344
Love Is a Sickness... 871
789

Index of Authors and Titles

- DARLEY, George**
(1795-1846),
The Solitary Lyre . . . 666
- DAVIDSON, John**
(1857-1909),
A Runnable Stag . . . 551
Thirty Bob a Week . . 679
- DE MORGAN, A.**
(1806-1871),
The Fleas 735
- DERWOOD, Gene**
Elegy, On Gordon
Barber, Lamentably
Drowned in his
Eighteenth Year . . . 197
- DICKINSON, Emily**
(1830-1886),
After Great Pain a
Formal Feeling
Comes 623
There's a Certain Slant
of Light 148
The Train 759
- DONNE, John**
(1573-1631),
A Hymn to Christ . . . 625
A Hymn to God the
Father 652
A Nocturnal Upon
Saint Lucy's Day . . 214
At the Round Earth's
Imagined Corners . . 645
Batter my Heart, Three
Person'd God 651
Break of Day 338
Change 411
Death, Be Not Proud 159
- Go and Catch a Fall-
ing Star 409
Going to Bed 426
Love's Deity 362
Love's Infiniteness . . 386
Love's Progress 423
On His Mistress 384
The Anniversary . . . 601
The Canonization . . . 364
The Dream 388
The Ecstasy 367
The Flea 375
The Good-Morrow . . 376
The Message 410
The Relic 372
The Sun Rising 370
The Will 592
- DOUGLAS, William**
Annie Laurie 298
- DOWSON, Ernest**
(1876-1900),
Non Sum Qualis Eram
Bonae Sub Regno
Cynarae 308
- DRAYTON, Michael**
(1563-1631),
Night and Day 389
The Parting 388
- DRUMMOND, William, of**
Hawthornden
(1585-1649),
Madrigal 298
- DRYDEN, John**
(1631-1700),
A Song for St. Cecilia's
Day, 1687 653
Farewell, Ungrateful
Traitor 341

Index of Authors and Titles

- No, No, Poor Suffering
Heart 330
Song 422
- DYER, Sir Edward
(P -1607),
A Modest Love 346
My Mind to Me a
Kingdom Is 535
- EBERHART, Richard
(b. 1904),
The Groundhog 136
- ELIOT, T. S. (b. 1888),
Ash-Wednesday 627
Burnt Norton 457
Portrait of a Lady... 564
Whispers of Immor-
tality 234
- ELLIOT, Jane
(1727-1805),
Lament for Flodden.. 207
- EMERSON, Ralph Waldo
(1803-1882),
Brahma 105
Concord Hymn 209
Fable 594
The Rhodora 105
The Snow-Storm.... 431
- FANSHAWE, C. M.
Enigma 742
- FIELD, Eugene
(1850-1895),
A Dutch Lullaby 752
Little Boy Blue 139
- FRIZGELIAND, Edward
(1809-1883),
The Rubáiyát of Omar
Khayyám 264
- FLEMING, Marjory
(1803-1811),
A Sonnet on a Monkey 714
- FLETCHER, John
(1579-1625),
Heur, Ye Ladies.... 421
Weep No More 290
- FRENEAU, Philip
(1752-1832),
The Indian Burying
Ground 142
- FROST, Robert
(b. 1875),
Stopping by Woods on
a Snowy Evening.. 143
The Road Not Taken. 568
- GILBERT, Sir W. S.
(1863-1911),
The Suicide's Grave. 739
To the Terrestrial
Globe 698
- GOLDSMITH, Oliver
(1728-1774),
Elegy on the Death of
a Mad Dog 701
Woman 191
- GRAHAM, Harry
(1874-1936),
Mr. Jones 732
Waste 732
791

Index of Authors and Titles

- GRAVES, Robert (b. 1895),
Lost Acres 324
- GRAY, Thomas (1716-
1771),
Elegy Written in a
Country Church-
yard 202
Ode on a Distant Pros-
pect of Eton Col-
lege 607
On a Favourite Cat
Drowned in a Tub
of Gold Fishes.... 554
- GRUVILLE, Fulke, Lord
Brooke (1554-1628),
Down in the Depth .. 647
Epitaph on Sir Philip
Sidney 674
Three Things There
Be 434
To Myra 331
- HARDY, Thomas (1840-
1928),
Afterwards 455
The Darkling Thrush. 452
- HARRINGTON, Sir John
(1561-1612),
Treason 737
- HENLEY, William Ernest
(1849-1903),
Invictus 578
- HERBERT, George
(1593-1633),
Redemption 650
The Collar 657
The Pulley 646
- HERRICK, Robert (1591-
1634),
Delight in Disorder .. 428
To the Virgins..... 420
Upon Julia's Clothes. 428
- HODGSON, Ralph
(b. 1872),
The Bull 555
- HOGG, James (1770-1835),
A Boy's Song 295
- HOOD, Thomas (1798-
1845),
I Remember, I Remem-
ber 448
Ruth 405
The Bridge of Sighs.. 210
- HOPKINS, Gerard Manley
(1844-1889),
Carrion Comfort 106
God's Grandeur 106
In the Valley of the
Elwy 98
Inversnaid 41
I Wake and Feel the
Fell of Dark . . . 176
Pied Beauty 104
The Habit of Perfec-
tion 635
- HOUSMAN, A. E.
(1859-1936),
To an Athlete Dying
Young 140
- HOWE, Julia Ward
(1819-1910),
The Battle Hymn of
the Republic 288

Index of Authors and Titles

HUNT, Leigh (1784-1859), Jenny Kiss'd Me	416	To Autumn	44
		To One Who Has Been Long in City Pent	42
JOHNSON, Lionel (1867-1902), The Dark Angel	107	KING, Ben (1857-1894), The Pessimist	713
JOHNSON, Samuel (1709-1784), Burlesque of Lope de Vega	737	KING, Henry (Bishop of Chichester) (1592-1669), Like to the Falling of a Star	444
JONSON, Ben (1573-1637), It Is Not Growing Like a Tree	603	KINGSLEY, Charles (1819-1875), Young and Old	291
The Hour Glass	456	LAMB, Charles (1775-1834), The Old Familiar Faces	451
To Celia	285	LANDOR, Walter Savage (1775-1864), Rose Aylmer	199
JOYCE, James (1882-1941), Bid Adieu to Maiden- hood	392	LANIER, Sidney (1842-1881), The Marshes of Glynn	98
KEATS, John (1795-1821), A Thing of Beauty is a Joy For Ever	96	LEAR, Edward (1812-1888), The Owl and the Pussy-Cat	751
Bright Star! Would I Were Steadfast as Thqu Art	383	The Pobble Who Has No Toes	702
La Belle Dame Sans Merci	161	There Was an Old Man who said, "Hush!"	729
Ode to a Nightingale	305	There was a Young Lady of Portugal..	729
On a Grecian Urn	95		793
On First Looking into Chapman's Homer. . . .	678		
The Poetry of Earth Is Never Dead	37		
There Was a Naughty Boy	700		

Index of Authors and Titles

- LINDSAY, Vachel (1879–1931),
The Congo 491
- LODGE, Thomas (1556–1625),
Love in My Bosom
Like a Bee 356
Rosaline 414
- LOVELACE, Richard (1618–1658),
To Althea from Prison 350
To Lucasta, on Going Beyond the Seas... 236
To Lucasta on Going to the Wars 349
- LOWELL, James Russell (1819–1891),
from *The Vision of Sir Launfal* 46
- LYLY, John (1553–1606),
Cupid and Campaspe 357
- MACNEICE, Louis (b. 1907),
Jehu 443
- MARLOWE, Christopher (1564–1593),
Helen 401
Who Ever Loved, that Loved Not at First Sight? 363
The Passionate Shepherd to His Love.. 358
- MARVELL, Andrew (1621–1678),
Definition of Love 336
On a Drop of Dew... 644
- Thoughts in a Garden 46
To His Coy Mistress. 334
- MASFFIELD, John (b. 1887),
Sonnet: I Could Not Sleep for Thinking of the Sky 442
- MELVILLE, Herman (1819–1891),
The March into Virginia 130
- MEREDITH, George (1828–1909),
Lucifer in Starlight.. 434
from *Love in the Valley* 351
- MILLAY, Edna St. Vincent (b. 1892),
Dirge Without Music 155
Euclid Alone Has Looked on Beauty Bare 322
To Jesus on His Birthday 175
Sonnet: What Lips my Lips Have Kissed, and Where, and Why 379
- MILTON, John (1608–1674),
Allegro 611
Il Penseroso 615
Lycidas 215
Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity... 636
On His Deceased Wife 231

Index of Authors and Titles

- On Time 454
 Sonnet: How Soon
 Hath Time the
 Subtle Thief of
 Youth 600
 Sonnet: When I Con-
 sider How My Light
 Is Spent 599
- MOORE, Marianne
 (b. 1887),
 Spenser's Ireland 113
- MOORE, Thomas
 (1779-1852),
 A Joke Versified... 733
 Believe Me, If All
 Those Endearing
 Young Charms 282
 Oft in the Stilly Night 446
 The Harp That Once
 Through Tara's
 Halls 278
- MORE, Sir Thomas
 (1478-1535),
 A Rueful Lamentation
 on the Death of
 Queen Elizabeth .. 149
- MUIR, Edwin (b. 1887),
 The Road 72
- NASHE, Thomas
 (1567-1601),
 In Time of Pestilence 255
 Spring 60
- OLDYS, Wm. (1687-1761),
 On a Fly Drinking
 Out of His Cup .. 456
- O'SHAUGHNESSY, Arthur
 William Edgar
 (1844-1881),
 Ode 676
- OWEN, Wiltred (1893-
 1918),
 Greater Love 132
 The Show 126
- PEACOCK, Thomas Love
 (1785-1866),
 The War Song of
 Dinas Vawr 749
 The Three Men of
 Gotham 714
- POE, Edgar Allan
 (1809-1849),
 Annabel Lee 487
 The Haunted Palace . 321
 The Raven .. 542
 To Helen 406
 Ulalume 325
- POPE, Alexander
 (1688-1744),
 A Little Learning. . 673
 Engraved on the Col-
 lar of a Dog 734
 Know then thyself... 604
 Vital Spark of
 Heavenly Flame .. 163
- POUND, Ezra (b. 1885),
 Pour L'Election de son
 Sepulchre (E. P.
 Ode) 668
 Sestina: Altaforte ... 129
 795

Index of Authors and Titles

- PRIOR, Matthew
(1664-1721),
A true maid 731
Epigram 731
- RALEIGH, Sir Walter
(1552-1618),
The Nymph's Reply to
the Shepherd 359
- RANSOM, John Crowe
(b. 1888),
Captain Carpenter .. 176
Painted Head 193
- READ, Herbert
(b. 1893),
Beata L'Alma 66
The Analysis of Love. 569
- ROBINSON, Edwin Arling-
ton (1869-1935),
Richard Cory 179
The Master 663
- RODGERS, W. R.
(b. 1911),
Snow 432
- ROSSETTI, Christina
Georgina (1830-
1894),
A Birthday 332
Song 151
- ROSSETTI, Dante Gabriel
(1828-1882),
The Blessed Damsel 526
- SACKVILLE, Charles, Earl of
Dorset (1638-1704),
Song, Written at Sea,
in the First Dutch
War 747
- SAWYER, C. P. (1854-
1935),
I Us'd to Love my
Garden 731
- SCHWARTZ, Delmore
(b. 1913),
In the Naked Bed, in
Plato's Cave 184
The Heavy Bear 192
- SCOTT, Sir Walter
(1771-1832),
Hunting Song 281
- SHAKESPEARE, William
(1564-1616),
Passages from Plays:
All the World's a
Stage 181
Cleopatra 401
Farewell to All My
Greatness 183
He Jests at Scars,
That Never Felt a
Wound 400
Imagination 672
Our Revels Now
Are Ended 141
Ulysses Advises
Achilles 185
The Quality of
Mercy 589
The Uses of Ad-
versity 594
To Be, or Not to Be 166
To Gild Refined
Gold 591
To Thine Own Self
Be True 590
Sonnets:
63, 191, 231, 341, 342,
344, 354, 355, 360,

Index of Authors and Titles

- 361, 366, 367, 371,
373, 374, 376, 377,
380, 391
- Songs from Plays:*
Blow, Blow, Thou
Winter Wind .. 289
Fear No More.... 208
Full Fathom Five
Thy Father Lies 208
Hark! Hark! The
Lark 66
How Should I Your
True Love Know 294
It Was a Lover and
His Lass 62
Now the Hungry
Lion Roars 124
O Mistress Mine .. 335
Sigh No More,
Ladies 293
When That I Was
and a Little Tiny
Boy 299
Take, O Take Those
Lips Away 292
Tell Me Where Is
Fancy Bred 296
To-morrow is Saint
Valentine's Day.. 420
Under the Green-
wood Tree 56
Who Is Silvia?.... 293
Winter 430
You Spotted Snakes 125
The Phoenix and the
Turtle 381
- SHELLEY, Percy Bysshe
(1792-1822),
Love's Philosophy .. 390
Music, When Soft
Voices Die 150
- Ode to the West Wind 51
One Word is Too
Often Profaned ... 300
The Cloud 38
The Indian Serenade. 337
To a Skylark 309
When the Lamp is
Shattered 168
- SHIRLEY, James (1596-
1666),
The Glories of Our
Blood and State... 160
- SIDNEY, Sir Philip
(1554-1586),
Come, Sleep 339
Desire 610
Leave Me, O Love .. 622
Loving in Truth 665
My True Love Hath
My Heart 391
Sestina 801
The Highway 333
The Nightingale, as
soon as April
Bringeth 378
To the Moon 379
- SKELTON, John (1460?-
1529),
To Mistress Isabel
Pennell 746
- SMART, Christopher
(1722-1770),
Glorious the Sun in
Mid-Career 658
The Man of Prayer .. 596
He Sang of God 622

Index of Authors and Titles

- SOUTHWELL, Robert**
(1561P-1595),
The Burning Babe... 659
Times Go By Turns... 580
- SPENDER, Stephen**
(b. 1909),
I Think Continually of
Those Who Were
Truly Great 94
- SPENSER, Edmund**
(1552-1599),
My Love Is Like to Ice 339
One Day I wrote Her
Name 345
Prothalamion 394
Ye Tradeful Merchants 391
- STAUFFER, Donald A.**
(b. 1902),
The Lemmings 761
- STEVENS, Wallace**
(b. 1879),
Sunday Morning 256
- STEVENSON, Robert Louis**
(1850-1894),
My Shadow 709
Requiem 164
- STICKNEY, Trumbull**
(1874-1904),
On Some Shells Found
Inland 235
- SUCKLING, Sir John**
(1609-1642),
The Constant Lover.. 418
Why So Pale and
Wan? 419
- SWIFT, Jonathan**
(1667-1745),
A Gentle Echo on
Woman 722
- SWINBURNE, Algernon**
Charles (1837-1909),
A Forsaken Garden . 156
Before the Beginning
of Years 90
The Garden of Proserpine 145
- TATE, Allen (b. 1899),**
The Wolves 89
The Mediterranean .. 112
- TENNYSON, Alfred, Lord**
Tennyson (1809-1892),
As Sometimes in a
Dead Man's Face... 230
As Thro' the Land at
Eve Wo Went... 349
Be Near Me 261
Blow, Bugle, Blow.. 319
Break, Break, Break. 453
Crossing the Bar.... 163
Dash Back 733
Flower in the Crannied Wall 182
I Envy Not in Any
Moods 340
I Held It Truth 237
I Wage Not Any Feud
with Death 144
Locksley Hall 77
Maud 346
Of One Dead..... 154
Oh Yet We Trust That
Somehow Good ... 579
Ring Out, Wild Bells. 660

Index of Authors and Titles

- St. Agnes' Eve 648
 Sir Galahad 531
 Tears, Idle Tears... 445
 The Lady of Shalott. 474
 The Lotos-Eaters:
 Choric Song 312
 The Miller's Daughter 343
- THOMAS, Dylan
 (b. 1914),
 A Refusal to Mourn
 the Death by Fire,
 of a Child in Lon-
 don 128
 Vision and Prayer .. 238
- THOMPSON, Francis
 (1859-1907),
 In No Strange Land.. 621
- THOMSON, James
 (1834-1882),
 As We Rush 581
 from The City of
 Dreadful Night ... 244
- TICHBORNE, Chidiack
 (1558-1586),
 Poem, Written on the
 Eve of Execution. 213
- TRAHERNE, Thomas
 (1637-1674),
 Wonder 75
- TRENCH, Herbert
 (1865-1923),
 Jean Richepin's Song 110
- VAUGHAN, Henry
 (1621-1695),
 The Retreat 74
- The World 655
 They Are All Gone
 into the World of
 Light 232
- WALLER, Edmund
 (1606-1687),
 On a Girdle 413
- WEBSTER, John (1580?-
 1630?),
 All the Flowers of the
 Spring 174
- WHELOCK, John Hall
 (b. 1886),
 The Black Panther .. 180
- WHITMAN, Walt (1819-
 1892),
 Animals 548
 A Noiseless Patient
 Spider 236
 Grass 53
 O Captain! My Cap-
 tain! 662
- WILDE, Oscar (1856-
 1900),
 from The Ballad of
 Reading Gaol 534
- WILLIAMS, Oscar
 (b. 1900),
 The Seesaw 262
- WILMOT, John, Earl of
 Rochester (1647-
 1680),
 from A Satyr Against
 Mankind 187

Index of Authors and Titles

WITHER, George (1588-1667), Shall I, Wasting in Despair 417	WOTTON, Sir Henry (1568-1639), The Character of a Happy Life 582
WOLFE, Charles (1791-1823), The Burial of Sir John Moore After Corunna 133	WYATT, Sir Thomas (1503-1542), Vixi Puellis Nuper Idoneus 167
WORDSWORTH, William (1770-1850), A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal 230 Character of the Happy Warrior ... 586 Daffodils 37 Ode, Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood .. 221 She Dwelt Among the Untrodden Ways .. 156 Strange Fits of Passion Have I Known.... 393 The Rainbow 68 The Solitary Reaper.. 304 The World Is Too Much With Us.... 323 To the Cuckoo 60 Upon Westminster Bridge 55 Written in March ... 62	WYLIE, Elinor (1886-1929), O Virtuous Light ... 320
	YEATS, William Butler (1865-1939), A Coat 672 Among School Chil- dren 70 An Irish Airman Fore- sees His Death 133 Cuchulain Comforted 228 A Prayer for My Daughter 248 Crazy Jane Talks with the Bishop 386 Sailing to Byzantium. 439 The Lake Isle of Innis- free 597 The Second Coming . 450 The Three Bushes... 524 To a Friend Whose Work Has Come to Nothing 65 When You Are Old.. 463

